

OPERATIONS OF THE  
25TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
ON GUADALCANAL

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# ON GUADALCANAL

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The diagram illustrates the experimental setup. A subject is seated at a table, looking at a video screen. A video camera is positioned above the screen. A target is placed on the table. A horizontal arrow indicates the direction of movement from the starting point to the target. A vertical arrow indicates the direction of movement from the starting point to the video screen. A horizontal arrow indicates the direction of movement from the video screen to the target. A vertical arrow indicates the direction of movement from the video screen to the video camera.

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OPERATIONS OF THE  
25TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
ON GUADALCANAL



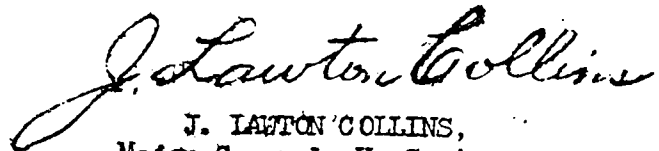
## FOREWORD

A subordinate unit in any operation sees only the ground over which it attacks and knows little, if anything, about the operations of the units to its right and left. Absorbed with its own problems, during the heat of campaign it is uninterested in what these flank units are doing as long as they keep abreast or furnish necessary security. Unfortunately, this sometimes results in a lack of appreciation of the teamwork required in the operations of the division as a whole.

The 25th Division had a rare opportunity for an analysis of its operations on Guadalcanal following the completion of the campaign which drove the Japs from the island. During this lull in action while the division occupied a defensive sector, a series of conferences was conducted in which the operations of the division as a whole were outlined by the Division Commander and members of his staff, followed in subsequent meetings by regimental and battalion commanders, the artillery commander, and the commanders of service units, who presented in detail the operations of their organizations. The bulk of the officers of the division and at least two noncommissioned officers from each company or battery attended these conferences.

Such an examination of the division's operations would be of value only if it were done with a critical eye. A mere recitation of the accomplishments of the division without a frank statement of the errors made and the lessons learned for future operations would be trite and uninteresting. The Division Commander therefore directed that a critical analysis be made with a view to future improvements in the morale and skill of the division.

These conferences have been reduced to writing and assembled in this volume. It is hoped that they will not only form a history of the 25th Division on Guadalcanal but will prove worthy of study by inquiring students of military affairs who often find difficulty in picturing the actual problems presented in combat.



J. LAWTON COLLINS,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

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HEADQUARTERS XIV CORPS

A. P. O. #453  
7 March 1943

GENERAL ORDERS)

NUMBER.....52)

CITATION FOR THE 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION

1. I personally and officially commend the officers and enlisted men of the 25th Infantry Division for their outstanding performance of duty in action on Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, during the period 10 January - 9 February 1943.

2. The 25th Infantry Division making the main effort of the XIV Corps attacked through dense tropical jungles and over mountainous terrain against well organized positions manned by a tenacious enemy whose mission was to hold to the last man. This division by its rapid advance and skillful maneuver encircled and pocketed enemy centers of resistance and finally broke the enemy's power to offer further effective defense by fighting its way into Kokumbona.

It was largely through the sustained drive of the 25th Infantry Division that the last vestige of organized resistance on Guadalcanal was crushed and possession of this strategically important Island, so vital to projected operations, finally wrested from the hands of the Japanese on 9 February 1943.

3. The splendid results obtained are attributed directly to the superb leadership, fighting spirit and eagerness for combat inherent in the 25th Infantry Division.

/s/ A. M. Patch  
/t/ A. M. PATCH,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

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# OPERATIONS OF THE 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION

## GUADALCANAL

### CHAPTER I

#### THE 25TH DIVISION

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1. ACTIVATION.—The 25th Division was activated from units of the Hawaiian Division when it was disbanded October 1, 1941. Major General Maxwell Murray organized and commanded the new 25th Division. The 27th Infantry and 35th Infantry were assigned to the division along with the 298th Infantry of the Hawaiian National Guard. The 8th F. A. Regiment formed the 8th F. A. Bn., 64th F. A. Bn., and 89th F. A. Bn. The medium 90th F. A. Bn., was formed from part of the 11th F. A. Regiment. On August 3, 1942 the 298th Infantry was relieved from assignment to the 25th Division and the 161st Infantry was assigned in its stead. The 161st Infantry had been stopped at Oahu enroute to the Philippine Islands, by the fall of Wake and Guam Islands.

#### 2. PRELIMINARY TRAINING.

a. Prior to the Jap attack of December 7, 1941 the division had detachments on active patrol duty and guarding vital installations in the South Sector of Oahu. On December 7 the division proceeded with dispatch from Schofield Barracks on its defensive beach positions following the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. On May 6, 1942 Major General J. Lawton Collins was assigned to command the division. The division sector included all the Naval installations on Oahu and the City of Honolulu. Construction work, improvement of defenses and maneuvers occupied the first half of 1942. Even while engaged in improving its defenses the 25th Division had continued to train for offensive operations and made every effort to keep itself mobile mentally and physically. Its high morale and offensive skill was finally recognized and the division was signally honored when the War Department selected it for transfer to the Southwest Pacific for combat against the Japanese. The division was relieved from the South Sector November 1, 1942 and moved into Schofield Barracks to intensify further its jungle-warfare and amphibious training.

b. The record of the division on Oahu was rittingly summarized by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, the Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, in charge of all operations in the Pacific, in a dispatch to the Division Commander on the departure of the division from Oahu:

"CINCPAC CONGRATULATES THE 25TH DIVISION WHICH, IN ADDITION TO PERFORMING DEFENSE DUTIES ON OAHU, HAS MADE SUCH GOOD USE OF ITS TIME THAT IT IS NOW OUTSTANDINGLY FIT AND READY FOR OFFENSIVE COMBAT. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER YOUR ACTIVE COMBAT IS IN THE SOPAC OR SOWEPAC AREA, WE HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS OF SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS BY YOU AGAINST THE ENEMY. CINCPAC EXTENDS BEST WISHES TO THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THIS DIVISION."

3. MOVEMENT TO GUADALCANAL.--The division left Hawaii in three convoys. The first convoy departed from Honolulu November 25, 1942, and arrived off Guadalcanal December 17, after a short stop at Noumea, New Caledonia. The second convoy left Honolulu December 6, 1942, and arrived at Guadalcanal January 1, 1943, coming by way of Suva, Fiji Islands. The third convoy left Honolulu December 16, 1942, arriving at Guadalcanal, via Fiji and Noumea, January 4, 1943. Generally speaking, each convoy carried a combat team plus some special troops. The 35th CT was the first to leave, followed by the 27th and the 161st CT in that order. The transports were commercially loaded at Honolulu as it was understood that the division would reload for combat at some intermediate port. Actually the division unloaded itself into landing boats off Guadalcanal, furnishing all unloading personnel, and landed on the open beaches west of the Tenaru River. (See appendix 1)

#### 4. COMMANDERS AND STAFF.

a. The following were the staff and unit commanders upon activation of the division in October 1941:

|                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Commanding General    | Maj. Gen. Maxwell Murray    |
| Asst. Division Comdr. | Brig. Gen. Rapp Brush       |
| Artillery Commander   | Col. Donald C. McDonald     |
| Chief of Staff        | Lt. Col. Thomas B. Burgess  |
| Adjutant General      | Capt. Thomas J. Marnane     |
| AC of S, G-2          | Maj. Allen F. Haynes        |
| AC of S, G-3          | Lt. Col. Donald J. Myers    |
| AC of S, G-4          | Lt. Col. Robert B. McClure  |
| Engineer Officer      | Maj. Parker M. Reeve        |
| Signal Officer        | Maj. Maurice P. Chadwick    |
| Ordnance Officer      | Maj. Alvin J. Gable         |
| Quartermaster         | Maj. Frederick T. Voorhees  |
| Chaplain              | Capt. Terence P. Finnegan   |
| CO 27th Inf.          | Col. William A. McCulloch   |
| CO 35th Inf.          | Col. William J. Morrissey   |
| CO 298th Inf.         | Col. Wilhelm A. Andersen    |
| CO 8th F. A. Bn.      | Lt. Col. Harold H. Ristine  |
| CO 64th F. A. Bn.     | Lt. Col. Harold A. Doherty  |
| CO 89th F. A. Bn.     | Lt. Col. William P. Bledsoe |
| CO 90th F. A. Bn.     | Lt. Col. Robert M. Bathurst |

b. The staff and commanders at the start of the Guadalcanal campaign were:

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Commanding General  
Asst. Division Comdr.  
Artillery Commander  
Chief of Staff  
AC of S, G-1  
AC of S, G-2  
AC of S, G-3  
AC of S, G-4  
Adjutant General  
Engineer Officer  
Signal Officer  
Ordnance Officer  
Surgeon  
Quartermaster  
Chaplain  
CO 27th Inf.  
CO 35th Inf.  
CO 161st Inf.  
CO 8th F. A. Bn.  
CO 64th F. A. Bn.  
CO 89th F. A. Bn.  
CO 90th F. A. Bn.

Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins  
Brig. Gen. John R. Hodge  
Brig. Gen. Stanley E. Reinhart  
Col. William P. Bledsoe  
Lt. Col. Thomas J. Marnane  
Lt. Col. Stuart F. Crawford  
Lt. Col. Joseph K. Bush  
Lt. Col. David H. Buchanan  
Major Wilbur A. Sweeten  
Lt. Col. Parker M. Reeve  
Lt. Col. Maurice P. Chadwick  
Lt. Col. Philip F. Lindeman  
Lt. Col. Arthur H. Thompson  
Lt. Col. Frederick T. Voorhees  
Maj. Terence P. Finnegan  
Col. William A. McCulloch  
Col. Robert B. McClure  
Col. Clarence A. Orndorff  
Lt. Col. William W. Dick, Jr.  
Lt. Col. William H. Allen, Jr.  
Lt. Col. Marshall K. Rudolph  
Lt. Col. James J. Heriot

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## CHAPTER II

### PLANS AND OPERATIONS

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#### SECTION I

##### OUTLINE OF OPERATIONS OF THE 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Major General J. Lawton Collins, A. U. S.

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5. MISSION.--The situation presented to the 25th Division by letter of instructions, Headquarters XIV Corps, 5 January 1943 (See Appendix 2) was exceptionally interesting. At this time the division was still unloading equipment from its third convoy, one regiment was occupying a sector of the perimeter defense of Henderson Field, and the remainder of the division was in bivouac west of the Tenaru River, sorting equipment and supplies which had been unloaded on the beach. The mission assigned by these instructions required (1) a march to the west of from ten to fourteen miles to contact the enemy; (2) the envelopment of his south flank; (3) the reduction of the strong Japanese position on Mt. Austen; and (4) the seizure of the Corps objective, some three thousand yards to the west. The Corps Commander, Major General Alexander M. Patch, had made it clear to the Commanding General, 25th Division, that this operation was of the utmost importance and that it was essential that the envelopment should clear the flank of any Japanese resistance south and west of Mt. Austen. (See Appendix V)

6. PRELIMINARY RECONNAISSANCE.--Ground and air reconnaissances were initiated at once. Because of the lack of any suitable maps, aerial reconnaissance and study of stereoscopic pairs of mosaics of the division zone-of-action became absolutely necessary to proper

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planning of attack. The Division Commander and Assistant Division Commander, the Artillery Commander, members of the division staff, both front-line regimental and most battalion commanders were afforded an opportunity to fly over the future scene of operations. The G-4 and special staff officers were busied at once in locating possible sites for service installations and in planning possible logistical support. Even prior to January 5th, engineer reconnaissance of the probable zone-of-action, based on the assumption that the division would be employed on the south flank, had been started. Without this early engineer reconnaissance, and the resultant extension of the inadequate road-and-trail net, the division would never have been ready to launch its attack on January 10th.

#### 7. ANALYSIS OF THE TERRAIN.

a. It was apparent from these reconnaissances that the rough and broken terrain over which the division was to operate would have a dominating influence on the plan of maneuver and would render the problems of supply, communications and evacuation extremely difficult. (See Appendix IV). While no southern boundary had been assigned, the division zone-of-action was limited on the south by the precipitous slopes along the banks of the Lunga River south of Mt. Austen. The northern boundary of the division ran along the northwest fork of the Matanikau River, north of which the 8th Marines held Hill 66 and the ridge extending from there to Pt. Cruz. The Matanikau River flows generally north across the zone-of-action, and with its several deeply-eroded and heavily-wooded valleys cuts up the zone into three distinct terrain compartments: The area east of the Matanikau; the area between the northwest and southwest forks; and the area between the southeast and southwest forks.

b. Mt. Austen comprises the southern half of the area east of the Matanikau River. This mountain rises steeply from the open but heavily-eroded foothills to the north. These foothills were in American hands and offered a suitable position area for the division artillery. However, there was only one dirt road, Wright Road, leading into the area from the northeast, and no lateral roads between Wright Road and the Matanikau River. The western crest of Mt. Austen, between Hills 31 and 27, was still held strongly by the enemy. Wright Road had already been extended, for jeeps only, to the northwest crest of Mt. Austen, but from the end of the jeep trail all supplies for troops operating to the south would have to be transported by hand over trails that would have to be cut through the dense jungle which covered the entire area between the northern slopes of Mt. Austen and the Lunga River. This area east of the Matanikau River would have to be used not only by the division artillery, but by whatever troops were assigned to capture Mt. Austen and envelop the south flank.

c. The compartment between the northwest and southwest forks of the Matanikau is practically an island. The main stream of the Matanikau, which flows north through a gorge east of hills 50, 54, and 55, effectively separates this "island" from the open country



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north of Mt. Austen, while the two forks which form the northern and southern boundaries of the area are decided military obstacles. The open area between these forks is curiously shaped in an almost exact replica of a "Gallopig Horse", which stands out in relief on the airphoto mosaics. A bridge had been constructed across the Matanikau River, near the right hind-foot of the "Gallopig Horse" and a precarious jeep trail had been started up the slopes of Hill 55, which was held by the 1st Bn., 2nd Marines. This trail which climbed precipitously some 900 feet to Hill 55, was the only avenue of approach to the "Gallopig Horse". All water, ammunition and other supplies would have to be packed by hand forward from Hill 55.

d. The area between the southwest and southeast forks of the Matanikau has one extensive clearing in the otherwise continuous jungle. This clearing, which included Hill 44 and the northern slopes of Hill 43, bore a striking resemblance to a "SeaHorse", which was promptly recognized by the troops. Any approach to the "SeaHorse" from the east or north would have to be across the extremely difficult slopes of the Matanikau forks. East and southeast of the southern rim of the southeast fork is a very irregular ridge which marked the watershed between the Lunga and the Matanikau Rivers. This ridge approaches Hill 43 from the south and then sends a spur almost due west. The southwest fork of the Matanikau passes through a gorge at the western end of this spur, thus marking the southern end of the Corps objective.

8. ENEMY SITUATION.--Little was known of the strength of the Japanese to be encountered except that they held the western part of Mt. Austen in force; that the Hills 52-53 area appeared to be well organized; and that they had some artillery in the vicinity of Hills X-Y. The Marines on Hill 55 and the Reconnaissance Squadron of the Americal Division on Hill 56 had run into Japs on their patrols to the south and west and had been pinned down in their positions for some time. Stiff resistance could be expected but, as is always the case, its development could not be foretold. Consequently the attack had to be based largely on an analysis of the terrain.

#### 9. SCHEME OF MANEUVER. (See Appendix V)

a. The division was thus faced with the proposition of attacking due west across the gorges of the Matanikau River or of maneuvering so as to seize the "SeaHorse" from the south and the "Gallopig Horse" from the north. The Division Commander decided to maneuver. (See Appendix 5 - F.O. #1, 25th Division). The 27th Infantry was assigned the task of seizing the "Gallopig Horse", while the 35th Infantry was directed to contain the strong enemy forces between Hills 31 and 27 with one battalion, while the remainder of the regiment was to execute a turning movement generally by way of the divide between the Lunga and the Matanikau. The 161st Infantry was to assemble in Division Reserve in the vicinity of the

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lower forks of the Matanikau. The 3rd Battalion, 182nd Infantry, which was attached to the division, was to advance its positions to a line running southeast from the upper forks of the Matanikau near Hill 50 so as to cover the position area of the artillery and to block any avenue of escape for the Japs from the Matanikau basin between Hills 43, 44 and 27. The 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines and the Reconnaissance Squadron of the Americal Division were to hold in place until passed through by the 27th Infantry.

b. In order to seize the "Galloping Horse" by operations from the north it was necessary for the 1st Battalion of the 27th Infantry to proceed through the zone-of-action of the 8th Marines to Hill 66. From Hill 66, the 1st Battalion was to cross the northwest fork of the Matanikau at the so-called "Jap waterhole" and to seize promptly the Corps objective along the fore-legs of the "Galloping Horse". The left battalion of the 27th Infantry, which assembled on Hill 55, was to proceed up the hind legs of the "Galloping Horse", and capture Hills 50, 51, and 52. It was then to hold defensively to the south while the regiment pushed the attack to the Corps objective along Hill 53 and the "Horse's Head". The Regimental Commander was informed that, if necessary, one battalion of the 161st Infantry would be made available to him to extend a block across the upper forks of the Matanikau between Hill 50 and the tail of the "SeaHorse" and to hold a defensive front facing south along Hills 50 and 51. He was also informed that if the 35th Infantry ran into trouble south of Hill 43, it might be necessary for the 27th Infantry to attack the "SeaHorse" from the north before proceeding to the capture of Hill 53. The maneuver of the 27th Infantry, if successful, would pocket all Japanese who were in the large wooded area between the four legs of the "Galloping Horse".

c. The initial maneuver of the 35th Infantry around the south flank, if successful, would pocket all Japanese within the basin of the southeast fork of the Matanikau. The final maneuver of the 35th Infantry, west of Hill 43, in conjunction with a movement of the 27th Infantry from Hill 53 to the south, would pocket the Japanese in the valley of the southwest fork of the Matanikau.

d. Thus three great pockets were to be created by seizing the dominating terrain features in the division zone-of-action. Once created, these pockets could be reduced more or less at leisure.

#### 10. ARTILLERY SUPPORT.

a. The above scheme of maneuver was to be supported by the Division Artillery from position areas between Wright Road and the Matanikau, north of Mt. Austen. The 8th Field Artillery was placed in direct support of the 27th Infantry; the 64th Field Artillery in direct support of the 35th Infantry; and the 89th and 90th Field Artillery Battalions were in general support. The only preparation to be fired was to be placed on the "waterhole" area, on the north-

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west fork of the Matanikau, through which the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry had to pass. This area was reported by the Marines to be held in force by the Japanese who had dug in in a very heavily wooded ravine. It was therefore necessary to place an aerial bombardment and an artillery preparation there in order to clear the way. It was also hoped that this preparation would draw the attention of the enemy to the right flank of the division and would thus help to cover the secret move of the 35th Infantry around the south flank.

b. Here tribute should be paid to the Division Artillery for its development and occupation of positions the steep slopes of the badly-eroded hills north of Mt. Austen and for the hauling of the necessary ammunition in the short time available. This tribute is shared by the 65th Engineer Battalion which opened and maintained the roads that made this possible. Only the artillery prime-movers and a handful of trucks were available to do the tremendous task of ammunition hauling. No one who had not seen the ground prior to its occupation could have any conception of the job that the artillery and the engineers did leading up to the awe-inspiring concentration which opened up on the Japanese at the "waterhole" at 0550 January 10th.

11. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS - 1ST PHASE.--Details of the regimental operations will be covered later in this volume. It is sufficient to say that the operations of the division went off as planned and that by the 15th of January the three great pockets, which the maneuvers were designed to create, had been made and the bulk of the Japanese forces opposing the Division had been effectively bottled up. Seldom has an action been carried through so closely in accordance with the basic plan. Before passing on to the next phase of the division's operations, note should be taken of the remarkable fighting of the 27th and 35th Infantry Regiments. The operations of the 27th in the capture of Hills 52 and 53 and the head of the "Gallopig Horse" were over open country and brought to mind scenes that have been pictured so glowingly in the history of the Civil War. In contrast to this open warfare of the 27th, the operations of the 35th Infantry were carried on through the densest and most difficult of tropical jungles. The advance of the 3rd and 1st Battalions of the 35th, which caught the Japanese flat-footed, will go down as one of the most remarkable exploits in the South Pacific War. The 35th Infantry had beaten the Japs at their own game of jungle fighting.

## 12. MOPPING UP.

a. Following the seizure of the Corps objective, the week of January 15th - 21st was devoted to the task of mopping up the three great pockets that had been created and in squeezing the Japanese within these pockets into smaller areas where they could be annihilated. The reduction of the pocket between Hills 31 and 27 was a major operation which will be covered in detail later. Similarly, the elimination of the Japanese pocketed south of Hills 52 and 53 by the 1st Battalion of the 161st Infantry will be discussed later.

b. This period was also spent in extending the road net and in preparing the logistical support for the next phase.

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13. MISSION - 2ND PHASE.--The second phase of the Division's operations called for a continuation of the outflanking maneuver around the enemy's south flank in coordination with the attack of the composite Marine-American Division which was to make a holding attack to the west. (See Appendix VIII - F.O. 1, XIV Corps, 16 January 43). The boundary between divisions was extended to the west so as to give the 25th Division the hill-mass 87-88-89, which dominated the Kokumbona area in the same manner that Mt. Austen dominated Henderson Field.

14. SCHEME OF MANEUVER. (See Appendix V)

a. The division was assigned an objective which included Hill 87 and the ridges extending west thereof. The Division Commander decided to attack with regiments abreast, with the 27th Infantry on the right and 161st on the left. (See Appendix IX - F.O. 2, 25th Div).

b. The 27th Infantry was directed to advance generally astride the narrow open ridge known as the "Snake", and to assault Hill 87 from the east. The 161st Infantry, after capturing Hills X, Y, and Z (west of Hill 53) was to attack to the northwest from Hill Y towards Hill V, southwest of Hill 87. Thus the 161st Infantry would be executing the principal effort of the division by outflanking Hill 87 from the south, while any enemy holding Hill 87 would be contained by the attack of the 27th Infantry. In accordance with oral instructions of the Corps Commander; it was the intention of the Division Commander, if all went well, to push the 161st Infantry past the Corps objective to the north and to seize Hills 88 and 89 without waiting for the reduction of Hill 87 by the 27th Infantry.

c. The 35th Infantry, which was still engaged in the arduous task of mopping up the Japanese positions in the valleys of the Matanikau and on Mt. Austen, was directed to protect the south flank of the division and to extend patrolling to the west along the south flank of the 161st Infantry.

15. ARTILLERY SUPPORT.--The artillery was to support the attack initially from its existing positions, which had been carefully selected in the first place so that fire could be placed as far west as Kokumbona without displacement. The 8th Field Artillery was in direct support of the 27th Infantry; the 89th Field Artillery in direct support of the 161st Infantry; and the 64th Field Artillery in direct support of the 35th Infantry, subject to priority calls from the Division Artillery Commander for the support of the 27th or 161st Infantry Regiments. The 90th Field Artillery Battalion was in general support. There was to be no preparation.

16. CHANGE IN PLAN.--Preliminary reconnaissance by the 1st Bn., 27th Infantry had located some enemy machine guns along the ridge projecting east from Hill 87. It was expected that the enemy would hold Hill 87 in force, as it was the dominating terrain feature in the

whole Kokumbona area. However, soon after the attack jumped off on the morning of January 22nd, the Division Commander at the Division OP on Hill 49, saw the leading elements of the 27th Infantry starting up the slopes of Hill 37, apparently with only light opposition. By 0940 the whole of Hill 87 had been occupied and it was apparent that the 27th Infantry was in a much better position to take up a pursuit than the 161st Infantry, which had a difficult march facing it across the branch of the Matanikau between Hills Y and V. The Division Commander decided promptly to change the plan of attack. He directed by telephone from the OP, that only the leading battalion of the 161st Infantry would cross from Y to Z, and that the remainder of the regiment would be shifted to the north to follow along the Snake behind the 27th Infantry. This movement of the 161st Infantry was made in order to secure the line of communications of the 27th Infantry and to mop up any Japanese remaining in the heavily-wooded area south of the "Snake" and south of Hill 87. The Division Commander moved via Hill 66 to contact the 27th Infantry, which had temporarily outrun its wire communications, and to direct the regiment to push its attack on to Hills 88 and 89. While passing Hill 66, the Division Commander met the Chief of Staff of the Corps, Brigadier General Robert L. Spragins, and obtained from him, in the name of the Corps Commander, authority to continue the drive of the division into Kokumbona as rapidly as possible. Arrangements were made with the Corps to shift the boundary of the division to the north to include Hills 91, 93, and 99 in the division zone-of-action.

17. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS - 2ND PHASE.--The details of the attack of the 27th Infantry and the operations of the 161st Infantry will be covered later. Suffice it to say here that by 1530 on January 22nd the 27th Infantry had seized Hills 88 and 89, and before dark had its leading battalion on Hills 90 and 98 overlooking Kokumbona. By noon the following day Kokumbona was seized by the 27th Infantry and a block established across the beach road north of Hill 99, thus effectively bottling up all the Japanese facing the Marine-American Division. The 27th Infantry had covered approximately ten miles in a day and a half. Only those who have been over the original trail from Hill 86 via 87, 88 and 89 to Kokumbona can have any adequate appreciation of the remarkable character of this advance. Along with the outflanking maneuver of the 35th Infantry south of Hill 43, it will undoubtedly go down as one of the great operations in the history of the 25th Division. In the next two days, the 161st Infantry extended its security lines all the way from Hill 50 to Hill 90, so as to free the 27th Infantry for further advance to the west. The division was prepared to continue its drive toward Cape Esperance but unfortunately a threat of a Japanese attack in force against Guadalcanal developed at this time. The division was withdrawn and moved to the area east of the Lunga River and occupied beach defense positions covering Henderson and Carney Fields. However, the 27th Infantry had pushed its advance west of the Poha River and had captured great quantities of enemy artillery, ammunition and supplies before it was relieved on January 26th by the 147th Infantry and the 6th Marines.

18. FINAL OPERATIONS OF 161ST INFANTRY.--The division did have the honor of participating in the final advance which was to destroy

the last vestiges of Japanese resistance on the island. On February 2nd, the 161st Infantry was attached to the Americal Division, relieved the 147th Infantry west of the Bengasi River and took over the advance on Cape Esperance. Sometime earlier a battalion of the 132nd Infantry of the Americal Division had been landed on the west coast of the island, in the vicinity of Nugu Point with a view to preventing withdrawal of any Japanese in that direction. By February 5th the 161st Infantry and the battalion of the 132nd Infantry had made a juncture a few miles east of Cape Esperance. The Japanese occupation of Guadalcanal was over. The 161st had completed another great march to take its place with the 27th and 35th Infantry Regiments in making the 25th Division truly the "Lightning Division."

## SECTION II

### G-2 PHASE

Lt. Col. S. F. CRAWFORD, G.S.C.

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19. PRIOR PLANNING.--a. The function of the G-2 is to reduce uncertainties concerning the enemy and terrain. In Oahu, when it was learned that the Division was to leave for the South Pacific, an attempt was made to obtain information of the terrain of all the possible zones of action. Detailed maps and good mosaics of islands in the South Pacific were very few.

b. Upon arrival of the division in Noumea an effort was made to get maps of Guadalcanal. A few copies of the 104 Map were obtained. This map was an uncontrolled sketch and entirely inadequate. After the division had gone into action some excellent stereoscopic photos became available.

c. Divisions are dependent upon higher headquarters for supply of maps and mosaics. Difficulties in obtaining adequate terrain studies were due to limited paper, limited photo laboratories, and failure to send topographic companies into the combat zone. The only known controlled chart of Guadalcanal was made by the 25th Division Artillery, an additional task which was forced on it by necessity.

d. Information concerning the enemy was obtained from prisoners, documents, and reconnaissance. Japanese prisoners have proved to be willing talkers, and almost without exception were truthful to the extent of their knowledge. The Japanese keep notes concerning all their activities. Captured documents gave detailed dispositions, showed strong points, observation posts, command posts, artillery positions, and identified units on the ground.

e. Ground reconnaissance was made by patrols, and aerial reconnaissance by unit commanders.

20. ENEMY OPERATIONS.--a. The Japanese, in an attempt to cut the lifeline to Australia, were building Henderson Field and intended to push down through the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, and possibly New Zealand. Guadalcanal was vital to the Japanese for this offensive thrust. Conversely, Guadalcanal was vital to the Allied Nations as a defensive measure to protect their lifeline to Australia and as an offensive measure to provide an advance base for a thrust to the northwest.

b. The 1st Marine Division, reinforced by the 2nd Marine Regiment, landed on Guadalcanal August 7, 1942. They were opposed by Japanese navy and marine units, and by Japanese laborers. The navy and marine units of the Japanese were in small detachments scattered on Tulagi, Gavutu, and around Henderson Field. The laborers, called "termites", were an inferior Japanese caste who did not meet the requirements for armed service.

c. On August 17th, 1942 the 1st Echelon of the Ichiki Detachment landed east of Koli Pt. This detachment consisted of about 1000 men of the 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, reinforced. The Marines met them on August 21st at the Ilu River (at that time thought to be the Tenaru) and killed approximately 900 of this force, remnants of which withdrew to the east.

d. Two battalions of the Japanese 124th Infantry reinforced by artillery and rapid fire units, one battalion of the 4th Infantry Regiment and the 2nd Echelon of the Ichiki Detachment (known as the Kuma Battalion) landed at Taivu Pt. in early September. They combined with remnants of the 1st Echelon of the Ichiki Detachment to form the Kawaguchi Detachment, about 5,000 strong. This composite unit moved to the south of Henderson Field, where they made a night attack September 12-13 against Edson's Ridge. This was known as "The Battle of Bloody Ridge." The Japanese forces pushed our units back, and penetrated deeply into our lines, nearly attaining their objective, but the Marines rallied and pushed them back, inflicting heavy losses on the Japanese. The 1st Battalion of the 124th Inf. was annihilated and only about 70 men of the Ichiki Unit survived this struggle. The Japanese then withdrew through the jungle to Kokumbona where they joined the remainder of the 124th Infantry.

e. By October 18th the entire Japanese 2nd Division and some of the headquarters of the 17th Army were on Guadalcanal. Two simultaneous attacks by the Japanese were to be made, starting October 23rd. The Japanese 4th Infantry, supported by artillery and ten tanks, attacked to the east along the coastal road and struck our positions on the Matanikau River. They lost all their tanks and 2,000 personnel before withdrawing on October 23rd. The following day the 124th supported by the remaining battalion of the 4th Infantry attacked at a point higher up on the Matanikau and were repulsed with heavy losses. The Japanese 16th and 29th Infantry Regiments arrived south of Henderson Field later than they had planned. They launched their attack from the south toward Henderson Field on October 25th. The 29th Infantry led the attack. They advanced wave after wave into machine gun fire until there were only 300 remaining in the regiment. Oct. 26th the 16th Infantry tried their luck. They employed the same tactics which the 29th Infantry had used and achieved the same results. This was the first major encounter in which U. S. Army forces were engaged on Guadalcanal. The 164th Infantry reinforced by the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, repulsed the Japanese attack. Other Japanese forces landed near Koli Pt. Nov. 2-3.



f. On November 8th the Japanese 228th Infantry proceeded to the vicinity of Mt. Austen, where they took up positions. The Oka Unit, which consisted of the 124th Infantry, less one battalion, plus the 2nd Battalion of the 228th Infantry, held a strong position in the area bounded by Hills 27, 31, 42, 43 and 44. The 1st and 3rd Battalions, 228th Infantry was in the pocket bounded by Hills 43, 44, 50, and 53. Artillery positions were located south of Hill 43 and south and west of Hill 53. American lines were consolidated along the Matanikau River and in the perimeter defense south of Henderson Field extending to Koli Pt. on the east. On November 14th a large convoy, consisting of 11 transports and cargo vessels, approached Guadalcanal. Four of these vessels reached shore and were beached between Kokumbona and Cape Esperance. The other seven ships were sunk. The four beached ships were later destroyed by our air forces. Some members of the Japanese 230th Infantry who succeeded in landing, proceeded to the Mt. Austen area to reinforce the Oka Unit. The situation was stalemated for the next two months until the division action started January 10, 1943.

g. Following the November disaster, the Japanese brought in personnel and supplies on destroyers. The destroyers came down from the Shortland Islands area on moonless nights. They unloaded near Cape Esperance and were gone before daylight. The last reinforcements were about 700 men, replacements for the 230th Infantry who were landed the night of January 14th.

h. Some 3,000 Japs were successful in scampering aboard destroyers (on 3 trips of the "Tokyo Express") and escaping during the night of February 7-8 after their forces had been killed, captured and chased by the lightning drive of the 25th Division. Most of the 3,000 were ranking officers and medical and supply service personnel. Fortunately some of the infantrymen escaped. They will spread the word that their officers deserted them when the going was tough; that the promised relief never arrived; that the promised aerial superiority was never obtained; that living on ants and human flesh is not conducive to Emperor worship; that medical attention was inadequate; and that the American soldier is superior to the best Japanese. As one of the prisoners said, "Tojo lie like hell!" This word will be spread by those soldiers who escaped.

i. It cost the Japanese a conservatively estimated loss of 40,000 men in their attempt to defend Guadalcanal. Two divisions; all of the 2nd, and a major part of the 38th and the 124th Infantry Regiment can be scratched from the Order of Battle. In addition, many troops of the 17th Army Headquarters were destroyed. The 25th Division accounted for 2313 known dead who were killed by infantry, and 132 prisoners of war. Over 100 MGs, 1800 rifles, much ammunition and other materiel were captured. No attempt is made to guess at the number killed by the accurate fire of the artillery units.

1. Japanese tactics were stupid and unimaginative. They attempted to gain hand to hand combat by walking into machine gun fire wave after wave. They taught and practiced attacking from the bottom of ravines against our positions on the ridges. There was no coordination or systematic use of their artillery. Units were sent in piecemeal. Combat units were weakened by the long and heavy hauls. 75mm guns were dismounted and carried by Japanese soldiers through rough jungle terrain.

21. G-2 OPERATIONS.--a. Upon arrival at Guadalcanal, all efforts were made to obtain information of the enemy, principally strength and disposition. The information available was sketchy, with estimates of strength varying from 5000 to 12,000. Information on dispositions was fairly accurate as a result of frequent patrolling by units in contact.

b. As previously stated, maps and aerial photographs were few and far between. Photographic missions were difficult to obtain principally because the few photographic planes available were being used by higher headquarters. However, a workable though uncontrolled mosaic was obtained in quantities for distribution to battalions. A reduction to an 8 x 10 size was requested for use by artillery observers and company commanders, and was received a few days after we entered the action. As the campaign progressed, better mosaics were provided, and at the close of the battle, a satisfactory mosaic of the entire area was on hand, although a controlled map or mosaic was never completed.

c. The handling of prisoners of war proved quite a problem, and it was found that the normal flow of prisoners to the rear was not practicable for several reasons. The difficult terrain and the treachery of the Japanese prisoner were prime factors. Military Police were sent to front line battalions to escort prisoners to the rear. Many of the prisoners were litter cases and because of the fact that all available men were required to carry our own wounded back to aid stations, additional help was necessary. Proper interrogation was impossible in many cases due to the long delay in getting prisoners to the rear. In one case, an interrogator spent three days with a front line battalion in order that information from the prisoners could be given to interested units in the minimum of time. However, some of the preliminary questioning was accomplished by personnel of the section who had taken a 6 week course in Japanese. Information such as unit designation and strength of troops was gotten from most of the prisoners at Division G-2. In addition, preliminary document translations were made by one of the members of the section, a man of Chinese descent familiar with Japanese characters.

d. During the action, the section constructed and maintained an observation post which was moved several times with the advance of the front lines. At one time it was necessary to keep two observation posts in operation, which drew heavily on the personnel of the section.

In addition, broadcasts were made to the Japanese forces asking their surrender, and of the three officers assigned to the section, at least one and more often two were always away from the headquarters.

22. LESSONS LEARNED.--a. Kind treatment of Japanese prisoners pays dividends. (The Japanese are taught never to surrender, thus no instructions are given on what to say if they are captured.)

b. Interpreters should be made available to front line unit commanders to obtain information of immediate concern.

c. Documents and information should be forwarded to higher headquarters without delay.

d. All American troops must know that if captured they give only the following information: name, rank, serial number. Men going into the front lines or on patrol must carry no means of unit identification.

e. Each regiment and division artillery should have an official photographer.

f. Engineer topographic companies are required in the combat zone.

### SECTION III

#### G-4 OPERATIONS

Lt. Col. D. H. Buchanan, G.S.C.

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#### 23. PRELIMINARY SUPPLY PLANS - FIRST PHASE.

a. Supply plans in preparation for the attack of Jan. 10, 1943 were made as simple as possible. Due to the vagueness of the tactical situation, and due to the many unpredictable courses the action might take, any plan of supply and evacuation had to be sufficiently flexible to meet all possible contingencies. The problem was complicated by the acute lack of transportation (less than 20% of T/BA), the extreme and critical shortage of engineer equipment, the lack of an adequate road net, the terrible condition of existing roads and the uncertainty that projected supply routes could actually be put in on the ground as planned to support the progress of the attack. Moreover, while planning supply installations and stocking dumps, there was the problem of unloading transports, moving troops, equipment, and supplies from bivouacs into assembly areas and on up to lines of departure.

b. The tactical plan for the attack, as outlined in Section I, had taken into consideration the fact that supply in support of the planned action was generally feasible. This determined, it was then the road net which furnished the framework upon which the supply plan was fabricated. On the morning of Jan. 10th, the road net consisted of the Beach Road, Wright Road and its extensions, Marine Trail, Skyline Drive, and the road westward ( and upward) from the South Matanikau Bridge to the crest of Hill 66. None of these were good. Most were passable for jeeps only, and in bad weather, practically impassable. Road repairs were concurrent with operations and the inadequate net had to bear the traffic of units on the north flank in addition to 25th Division traffic. The Matanikau, unfordable by motor vehicles, separated rear installations from front line troops and was inadequately bridged by four bridges, three of which could support jeeps only. Wright Road had to serve as the initial axis of supply for the 35th Infantry. The Beach Road - Marine Trail was the main supply route for the 27th Infantry. Each route would have to be extended as the troops advanced. The junction of Wright and Beach Roads, even though outside the division zone, was selected as the logical site for a Division Class I, III and V distributing point as this was the point farthest advanced on a route common to or giving access to all supply roads forward. Here it was planned to lay down and maintain a fifteen day level of rations, gas and oil, and two units of fire, while two units

of fire were to be in the hands of troops. Supplies were to be delivered by the Quartermaster to front line regiments as far as truck transportation permitted. Other organizations were to be supplied at the division DP. Water points for each unit were planned for and spotted as far forward as possible; supply roads were to be pushed immediately in rear of advancing troops. As all transportation was needed on the unloading beaches in the daytime, recourse to night hauling was necessary to stock unit and division dumps. Motor accidents incident to blackout driving on dangerous and almost impassable roads inevitably reduced the already pitifully inadequate transportation facilities.

c. Plans for the logistical support essential for the operation were initiated as soon as the corps directive was received. In fact, even prior to receiving the corps directive on January 5th, the Division Commander had directed detailed engineer reconnaissance of the probable zone of action of the division. An extension of Wright Road was projected to the west in order to open up a possible area for the artillery outside of the highly congested area along the coast, and to provide a lateral highway between the Wright Road and the Marine Trail which ran up the main valley of the Matanikau. To the east of the Wright Road-Beach Road junction, the latter was the only artery of supply for all troops west of the unfordable Lunga River. Furthermore, this road was bottlenecked at the only bridge over the Lunga. Accordingly, reconnaissance was directed for a covered route south of and parallel to the Beach Road, crossing the Lunga over a second bridge upon which some work had already been done by the Marines. Work was initiated on this route and the bridge actually constructed so as to bear foot troops, but the project had to be dropped because of the press of other matters and lack of essential engineering equipment. Had the Beach Road been denied to the division by naval, ground or aerial bombardment, distinctly within enemy capabilities, or had the Lunga Bridge been bombed or rendered unusable for any reason, the lack of this southern road would have been felt severely. The 65th Engineer Battalion did an excellent job of reconnaissance, and when the division received the final directive the battalion was ready to take over the job of maintenance of the Wright Road and to extend it farther up Mt. Auston and into the artillery area to the west. It is impossible to overemphasize the importance and necessity of such early engineer reconnaissance and planning in any divisional operation. Had these prompt steps not been taken to provide essential road communications, the division would never have been able to move into position by January 10th; the artillery could neither have gotten into position nor brought up the great amounts of ammunition which were necessary for the attack.

d. Evacuation plans included the serving of each front line regiment by a collecting company which was to send forward advance collecting points immediately in rear of the advancing troops. The collecting company for the 35th Infantry was located on Wright Road with the advanced collecting point initially on Hill 35. In the 27th Infantry's zone, the collecting company was located on the Beach Road, and the advanced collecting point was initially at the South Bridge over the Matanikau. An advance hospital was established by the clearing company

just east of Wright Road-Beach Road junction, as far forward as it was possible to be and still be in the rear of the troops served, and near the junction of all lines of evacuation. Jeeps were improvised to evacuate wounded from forward areas where ambulance traffic was impossible. Long and very exhausting litter carries were inevitable and plans were made for additional personnel for this purpose.

e. The foregoing, briefly and in general, gives the supply plan for the first phase of the attack, and sets forth some of the difficulties encountered in putting the plan into operation.

#### 24. OPERATIONS.

a. The attack progressed essentially as planned and was executed very rapidly. Supply was hard pressed to keep up.

b. In the 35th Infantry sector, supply had to be by carrying party from the end of the jeep trail pushed up Mt. Austen, to the two enveloping battalions, and to the battalion attacking Hill 27. Some 300 native carriers had been secured for this purpose, and with 35th Infantry personnel helping, this system proved effective initially, though most fatiguing on personnel. Soon, however, due to the extension of supply lines, carrying became impractical, and it was necessary to arrange for supply by air to the two enveloping battalions which had reached Hills 43 and 44. These two battalions were supplied for two days with food, ammunition and water dropped from B-17's. Meanwhile a barge and boat line was put in operation up the Matanikau to the base of Hill 50. Two home made barges were constructed of gas drums. Captured Jap assault boats were also put into use. Outboard motors were used where depth permitted, but soldiers named one boat "The Pusha-Mar". The name was not amiss. Medical personnel, Quartermaster personnel and the Cannon Company of the 161st Infantry operated this river line. At the base of Hill 50 native carriers again were put to use carrying from the river to the battalions, up and over terrain more vertical than horizontal. Soon the Engineers rigged three stages of elevated trolley ways, up which supplies were hauled and down which, on Stokes Litters, wounded were evacuated. Improvised cargo parachutes were used to the extent of local supply but some supplies were dropped without parachutes after being wrapped with canvas and burlap. About 75% of rations dropped were usable and 15% of ammunition. Practically none of the water which was dropped in 5-gallon cans was saved. Improvised sleds were also put into use up and down the steep slopes.

c. In the 27th Infantry sector, supply by jeep was resorted to. The last leg, from road's end to front lines, had to be taken over by carrying parties of soldiers and some 200 native carriers who had been obtained for the 27th Infantry.

25. PLANS - SECOND PHASE.---Prior to the attack, the 65th Engineer Battalion, with the help of the 57th Engineers of the Americal Division, had extended a jeep road from the Matanikau past Hill 66 to the head of the "Snake". It had been obvious from the first that the "Snake" would provide the only practical route for the development of a supply line west of Hill 66. Therefore the Engineers were prepared to push this route forward as rapidly as the 27th Infantry advanced. Supply of the 161st Infantry would have to be by hand from Hill 53 to X, Y and Z, thence across country to Hill V until the supply of both regiments could be handled over the Snake Road. It would also be necessary to extend the jeep trail from Hill 54 via Hill 52 to Hill 53 where native carriers would have to take over for the supply of the 161st Infantry's attack. Supply for the 35th Infantry was now stabilized.

26. OPERATIONS.

a. Initially, the attack and hence the supply progressed essentially as planned, up to the point where the Division Commander saw the advisability of sending the 27th Infantry on into Kokumbona instead of the 161st Infantry as originally planned, and of bringing the 161st Infantry northward onto the Snake. This simplified materially the supply of the 161st Infantry, as a road now existed down the backbone of the entire Snake.

b. When the 27th Infantry pushed into Kokumbona on January 23d, it was necessary to secure coastwise boats from the navy to supply and evacuate the Kokumbona area for two days until the Beach Road was cleared of enemy east of the 27th Infantry and the road could be pushed forward into that place.

27. SUMMARY.

The operations of supply in greater detail will be covered in subsequent chapters. Later, also, the errors made and the lessons learned will be pointed out. It is evident from the foregoing that supply and evacuation operations were characterized by a series of improvisations, adaptations, some unique inventiveness, and a great deal of sweat. In the course of operations, recourse was had to elevated trolleys across ravines and up precipices, native carriers overland, transport by air, sleds on grassy slopes, home made barges, and small Japanese boats up the rivers and larger boats along the coasts, in addition to the more conventional methods. The only criterion was "Does it work?" Throughout the action the jeep saved the situation time after time and without that grand little vehicle some of the tasks would have been well nigh impossible.

## SECTION IV

### COMMENTS OF THE DIVISION COMMANDER

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28. JAPANESE WEAKNESSES.--In evaluating the operations of the division and the lessons learned the division can be justly proud of its achievements. However, it should be remembered that the division was opposed by a Japanese force that had been considerably weakened by prior losses, by inadequate food and by the ravages of malaria. The division had the rare advantage of complete aerial superiority throughout the operations. Furthermore, the Japanese had very little artillery and only small stocks of ammunition. They lacked engineering equipment to improve the supply line from Kokumbona and were thus faced with as many difficulties of supply as the 25th Division. Because of these conditions the Japanese chose to hide themselves in the dense jungle and to organize positions chiefly on reverse slopes which afforded very limited fields of fire.

29. FAULTY USE OF COVER AND CONCEALMENT.--In consequence, our troops were able to occupy the open ridges with little or no fear of molestation from the Japanese artillery or aviation. When the division arrived on the island American troops were found so disposed, and unfortunately our troops followed the dangerous habit of bivouacking in congested groups on the slopes of these ridges and in marching unconcernedly, or driving jeeps, along the ridge trails. It is not to be expected that these conditions will ever occur again. The next time the Japanese are met we may not have complete aerial superiority and probably will be attacking Japanese positions better organized and better supported by artillery. Troops must be kept down and off the open ridges in daylight, except when actually attacking, and even then must avoid congestion, or there will be heavy loss of life. Platoon, company and battalion commanders must indoctrinate men now with the necessity for making the maximum use of cover and concealment; they must see to it that the troops do not become congested and do not expose themselves unnecessarily, particularly following the capture of an objective. Similarly, the artillery must be prepared to occupy more concealed positions and to camouflage promptly any exposed positions which are open to aerial observation.



30. NECESSITY FOR EARLY PLANNING.--The second important lesson is the necessity for prompt and effective aerial and ground reconnaissance, and for advanced planning based on these reconnaissances, particularly the planning of a sound system of supply and evacuation to back up the projected scheme of maneuver. A careful analysis and evaluation of the terrain, as to its probable effect on the operations, is essential. In jungle fighting, because of the cover afforded by the jungle, not much can be known of the strength and dispositions of the opposing forces. More than ever then, the scheme of maneuver must be based on the terrain, the lines of communication and the possibilities of supply and evacuation. Aside from the enemy opposition, the projected maneuver must fit the ground, the existing road and trail net, and the possibility of extending the supply lines to support the maneuver. More battles and campaigns are lost from failure of logistical support than from any other cause. If there is any question in the mind of a commander that the terrain or the supply difficulties will jeopardize his maneuver, then the maneuver should be changed accordingly. At the same time apparent difficulties of terrain should not be allowed to stop outflanking maneuvers. Determined troops, ably led, can often overcome the most difficult terrain, as was proven by the 35th Infantry.

31. SOUNDNESS OF BASIC PRINCIPLES.--The operations of the division proved beyond doubt that the basic principles taught in our service schools and included in our field manuals are eminently sound. This, of course, does not mean that they can be applied blindly, without modification to suit varying conditions. Maneuver is still the essence of attack. As was emphasized in the preparatory training of the division on Oahu, practically every attack comprises four basic elements: a holding force; a maneuvering force; a reserve; and a base of fire. These elements must be combined and employed to find the enemy and fix him so that he can't get away while we fight him, usually by an envelopment around one or both of his flanks, supported by the base of fire. Every effort must be made to fool the enemy as to the time, place, strength or speed of our maneuver. Finally we finish him by throwing in our reserves at the critical moment. Throughout, we must fend, or guard, our own flanks and lines of communication. These simple principles were applied successfully in more than one of the battalion operations, as will be shown in subsequent chapters. It should be remembered, therefore, that we should continue to apply with intelligence our six "F"'s:

Find 'em.

Fix 'em.

Fool 'em.

Fight 'em.

Finish 'em.

Fending all the while.

32. VALUE OF TEAMWORK.--Another point in the training of the division on Oahu which paid immeasurable dividends here was the teamwork developed within this division, which was one of our greatest sources of strength. The infantry, artillery, engineers, signalmen, and supply services have learned to work together in combat. The division learned to work with the Air, and obtained splendid cooperation in observation, supply and ground support. No one branch or agency alone could have overcome the difficulties that were faced. The division functioned as a smooth working, well-oiled machine. It must be kept running so by maintaining and improving the essential teamwork.

33. LEADERSHIP AND FIGHTING QUALITIES OF TROOPS.--Finally, we all have learned that after all the planning has been done and the orders issued, that the outcome depends almost wholly on the leadership of the officers and noncommissioned officers and the fighting qualities of the troops. When the going got tough we either failed or made progress depending on whether some subordinate leader rose to the occasion and personally led and directed the attack of his unit. The most inspiring thing about the operations of the division was the magnificent way in which the young officers and noncoms did rise to these occasions and the manner in which the men of the division responded to inspiring leadership. No one who did not see or participate in the campaign will ever fully appreciate the pangs of thirst that our men suffered, the weariness of their advances over terrible roads, under scorching sun or through sodden jungles, carrying their food, ammunition and water on their backs, evacuating their wounded by hand over miles of treacherous trails, and at the same time licking the hell out of the Japs. Anyone who says that the American youth of today cannot "take it", simply doesn't know what he is talking about. Ably led, the American soldier has again proven that he will go anywhere, do anything and lick more than his weight against any enemy in the world. It is up to everyone of us, officers and noncommissioned officers alike, to furnish this leadership.

## CHAPTER III - Part I

### OPERATIONS OF THE 27TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

PART I - Operations Jan. 10-13, 1943.

PART II - Operations Jan. 14-26, 1943.

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### SECTION I

#### OUTLINE OF PLANS AND OPERATIONS Colonel Wm. A. McCulloch, Infantry

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34. LANDING AND UNLOADING OPERATIONS.--The 27th Infantry arrived at Guadalcanal December 30, 1942 and landed by small boats on friendly shores. The regiment bivouaced in the beach area between the Ilu River and the Block Four River, except the 2nd Battalion, which was two miles farther east. The period from December 30 to January 7, 1943 was spent unloading transports, obtaining and cleaning equipment, making personal reconnaissances of the front lines by key officers and enlisted men, and accompanying patrols sent out by the Marines and the Americal Division. Company "D", 27th Infantry, defended the beach from the Ilu to the Block Four River during the above period.

35. FRONT LINE POSITIONS.--At the time of the commencement of our attack troops were dispersed along the western front as follows: The 8th Marines held a line from Point Cruz along the high ground to a point on Hill 66 just west of Hill 56. Hill 56 was occupied by the Reconnaissance Squadron of the Americal Division, and the 1st Battalion of the 2nd Marines held the high ground on Hill 54. It will be noted that there were no physical links between Hills 66 and 56, nor between Hills 56 and 54. These gaps in the ravines were covered by patrols.

36. ATTACK ORDERS.--a. The order for attack directed that a line be seized and held which in general was a prolongation of the line then held by the 8th Marines and ran just west of the forelegs of the head of the "Gallopig Horse", then down to the Matanikau River. It directed the 2nd Marine Division to maintain contact with the right flank of the 25th Division. The Reconnaissance Squadron, 1st Battalion of the 2nd Marines and the 3rd Battalion of the 182nd Infantry, were attached to the 25th Division for this operation. The Reconnaissance Squadron was to be released when directed by the Division Commander and the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines when passed through by the 27th Infantry.

b. The 27th Infantry was to be prepared to assist the operations of the 35th Infantry on the left.

c. An artillery preparation was to be fired from 0550 to 0620, followed by an air bombardment. The Division Artillery was to be prepared to mass its fires in either regimental zone-of-action. The 8th Field Artillery was in direct support of the 27th Infantry. The 65th Engineers were to maintain roads. Secrecy was stressed.

### 37. RECONNAISSANCE AND TERRAIN APPRECIATION.

a. The warning order to the regiment was issued on January 4th, and assigned a zone-of-action in general bounded by the west fork of the Matanikau on the north and the south-west fork of the same river on the south. The division objective (See Appendix V) was a north-south line some 3000 yards west. The zone-of-action had a wooded area on each flank with high rugged ground down the center. The slope of the valley south of Hills 51, 52, 53, was almost perpendicular and the slopes between Hills 54 and 56, and 56 and 66, were equally rugged. The Zone, approximately 2000 yards in width, indicated in general a frontage of two battalions, so a boundary between battalions was selected which ran generally east and west along the southern edge of the woods from Hill 54 to Hill 57, all to the south battalion. The north zone was assigned to the 1st Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. C. E. Journey, and the south zone to the 3rd Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. G. E. Bush, with the 2nd Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. H. V. Mitchell, in reserve.

b. The Cannon Company supported the attack of each assault battalion. The Antitank Company was attached to the 2nd and 3rd Battalions as carrying parties for water, ammunition, and food. The Band functioned as litter bearers during the regiment's operations.

c. Map, ground, and aerial reconnaissances were made by officers and key non-commissioned officers immediately after the warning order and contacts were made with unit commanders of front line units. Officers and men participated in patrols with these units through critical areas. Numerous conferences were held to insure complete coordination of plans.

d. It will be noted that there was but one approach to the zone on the south via a newly constructed jeep bridge below Hill 55. This road ended on Hill 55. It was extended to Hill 54 on the 11th and was completed to Hill 52 on the 14th. The zone on the north had no approach except from the north flank through the area of the 8th Marines. The use of this road would shorten the approach march of the 1st Battalion but involved a flank movement partly defiladed until the unguarded ravine was reached between Hill 66 and the "Horse's Hoof" to the south. Also, the left flank of the 8th Marines did not extend south to the division boundary at this critical junction.

e. The supply problem was the deciding factor in determining a supply route to the north zone; and it was felt that two battalions could not use the route on the south so satisfactory arrangements were made with the Marines for the use of an assembly area north-east of Hill 66 and their good road net to that area.

f. To gain unity of command, the Reconnaissance Squadron was attached to the 1st Battalion just south of Hill 66 so that the 1st Battalion intact would be free to occupy the high ground on the "Horse's Forelegs". Since Hill 56 was held by about 150 men and had to be secure for the attack, it was finally decided to ensure a less complicated movement and crossing of lines by leaving a holding force on the hill, and block possible approaches of the enemy in the valley from the east with this force.

g. To insure closing the gap between the left flank of the 8th Marines and the division boundary took more time than any other project and was only settled at a conference of all parties concerned late on the afternoon of January 8th, when a round table discussion, fast getting nowhere, was brought to a conclusion by the timely arrival of the Corps Commander and Division Commander. This resulted in an additional company of marines jumping off after the bombardment, extending the line south to the boundary and filling the gap, thus insuring safe conduct of the 1st Battalion to that point.

### 38. PRELIMINARY MOVEMENTS.

a. The entire regiment moved from initial bivouac areas on January 8th with the regimental C.P. in the valley of the Matanikau at the base of Hill 67, and all other elements, east of the mouth of the Matanikau and north of the Beach Road.

b. On the 9th, the 1st Battalion moved to an assembly area in a ravine on the east slopes of Hill 66; the 3rd Battalion to the area at the base of Hill 55. The 2nd Battalion did not move.

c. The regiment's plan directed that the 1st Battalion with the Reconnaissance Squadron, Americal Division, attached, attack on the right and occupy Hill 57. The 3rd Battalion was directed to attack on the left and occupy Hill 53. The 2nd Battalion was held in reserve in the general vicinity of Hills 54 and 55.

### 39. DETAILED OPERATIONS.

a. After an intense artillery preparation and dive bombing by the Air Corps, Company "F", 8th Marines, jumped off at 0650 to secure the right flank of the 1st Battalion. The Reconnaissance Squadron, Americal Division, jumped off at 0700 to secure the block on the Matanikau. Company "B" jumped off at 0735, secured the water-hole previously held by the Japanese, where it linked up with the left (south) flank of the 8th Marines, ensuring safe passage for the remainder of the battalion. Company "A", Company "C", and Company "D", in column of companies, jumped off at 0830, securing the northern edge of Hill 57 and the hill mass to the north. At 1140 January 10, 1943, the 1st Battalion reached its objective.

b. The 3rd Battalion moved by marching from its assembly area at 0300, January 10, 1943, reaching its line of departure north of Hill 54 at 0610. At 0635, at the termination of the bombing and aerial attack in front of the 1st Battalion, the 3rd Battalion attacked, passing through elements of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, with two companies abreast, "I" Company on the right, "L" Company on the left. The intermediate objective was Hill 52, to be taken by a double envelopment. Heavy enemy resistance was encountered from Hill 52, and the original scheme of maneuver failed on reaching grenade throwing distances of the crest. About noon, the hill not having been captured, the Commanding Officer, 3rd Battalion, revised his plan by shifting his mass to the northwest. "K" Company attacked on the right of "I" Company as the enveloping force, preceded by air and artillery bombardment at 1500. At the completion of this preparation, the 3rd Battalion assaulted and captured Hill 52 at 1625, and consolidated its position for the night.

c. The 2nd Battalion moved by marching from its bivouac area near the beach to the assembly area vacated by the 3rd Battalion and at 0720 was ordered to occupy Hills 50, 51, and 52, after their capture by the 3rd Battalion.

d. The 2nd Battalion occupied Hills 50 and 51, and the southeast slopes of Hill 52, with part of the command on this date.

e. On January 11, 1943, at 0930, the 3rd Battalion continued the attack, making only a slight advance during the day, mainly due to lack of water, heat exhaustion, and casualties. The battalion was ordered to strengthen Hill 52, as they had on the previous night and revert to the regimental reserve when passed through by the 2nd Battalion the following day. Five artillery concentrations were called for during the day.

f. The 2nd Battalion was ordered during the afternoon of January 11, 1943, to pass through the lines held by the 3rd Battalion and continue the attack at dawn January 12th, following an artillery preparation, aerial bombing and strafing. This was made possible by the attachment of the 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry, which took over the mission of the 2nd Battalion.

40. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED: Lessons learned during this phase of the operations were as follows:

(1). Supply of water to front lines in jungle fighting must be stressed.

(2). Cover and concealment were slighted due to lack of enemy artillery in force and air power.

(3). Too much bunching behind ridges and movements along crests of hills and skylines was prevalent.

(4). Carrying parties must be supervised so that supplies reach the units urgently needing the same and are not diverted and used by other troops enroute.

(5). These operations were only sustained by jeeps which functioned all day and were serviced in a blacked-out tent at night.

(6). Jeep roads must be pushed right up to the front line positions as rapidly as possible to save excessive depletion of manpower for carrying parties.

(7). While the infantry-artillery team functioned more smoothly each day, there was a lack of appreciation of proper missions for artillery initially. More extensive use could have been made of mortar and automatic weapons support.

(8). The four elements in the attack were fully demonstrated in all echelons and worked successfully in their functioning; namely, holding, base of fire, maneuvering, and reserve.

(9). The use of air, artillery, mortar and small arms support functioned smoothly on several occasions due to close coordination of parties concerned.

(10). The importance of leaders being well forward so they had first-hand information, could render quick decisions and supervise operations at critical times, was illustrated time after time. Their presence at the front also was a distinct morale factor in sustaining the attack.

(11). Every front line soldier must carry his entrenching tool forward, as the digging-in operation may be forced upon him at any moment. It is next to his weapon in importance.

(12). On reaching an objective, immediate steps must be taken to organize the ground. The tendency is to get in a huddle and discuss past incidents of the battle, collect souvenirs, and forget about security.

(13). Staff officers must project themselves forward during the fight and foresee operations which will need immediate planning in order to be executed in time.

(14). The "go-see-follow through" policy must never be neglected.

(15). When a stalemate is reached, even the smallest combat unit must immediately plan to overcome the stoppage by added fire power or maneuvering. Advantage must be taken of soft spots and the attack pushed by continued pressure.

(16). Enemy in ravines can be pocketed and by-passed successfully and mopped up later. Critical edges of the pocket must be covered to prevent sniping.

(17). Snipers are a nuisance but their ultimate success is futile. They can be stalked by individuals patiently approaching from different directions and watching for the overt movement which gives the victim away.

(18). Two men per fox hole at night alleviates loneliness and gives better security.

(19). Under artillery, mortar, grenade or bomb bursts hold your ground, if well dispersed. Running to another spot exposes you without cover and may land you in the impact area of the next explosion.

(20). A shelter half or raincoat should be carried for protection from the sun and rain in the daytime and cold at night.

(21). Needless firing at night against imaginary targets is a waste of ammunition and creates false alarms for troops who might otherwise be relaxing.

(22). Front line troops must be alert to take full advantage of the time interval after supporting fires have lifted and overrun the remaining enemy before he recovers.

(23). Class D rations should be carried in combat and Class C provided at temporary halts. Boullion cubes were excellent where hot water could be provided and the fruits and fruit juices ideal to help quench the thirst. Men do not eat heartily in combat.

(24). MEDICAL COMMENTS:

a. Jungle kits should be more compact, special care taken to see that atabrine, salt tablets, calcium hypochloride and sulfanilamide tablets are available.

b. Mess kits should not be used on front lines unless means are provided for proper cleaning.

c. More care should be exercised to see that men properly chlorinate drinking water. Canteens should be filled at any stream crossing and chlorinated before drinking. This necessitates the carrying and proper use of jungle kits.

d. Battalion aid stations should carry only essential medications for treatment of casualties. Carrying parties should be assigned if TBA equipment is to be carried.

(25). Communication Comments:

a. Sound power phones worked to excellent advantage.

b. Battalion communication officers should learn to anticipate in advance the disposition of front line troops and keep in close liaison with battalion and company commanders.

c. SCR 284 and SCR 511 work well. SCR 536 was found impractical in jungle terrain.

(26). Sanitation Comments:

a. More stress on straddle trenches. More men are lost through heat exhaustion and diarrhea than wounds. Covering dead bodies, cans, and feces will deprive flies of their food and cut down this menace which causes diarrhea through contamination of foods by flies.



## SECTION II

### OPERATIONS OF THE 1ST BATTALION, 27TH INFANTRY, FROM JANUARY 10TH TO 13TH INCLUSIVE.

Lt. Col. CLAUDE E. JURNEY, 1st Bn. 27th Infantry, Commanding.

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#### 41. MISSION

a. On January 5th the Regimental Commander took the Battalion Commander to Hill 49, and issued the warning order for the attack on January 10th. The 27th Infantry was to seize the "Galloping Horse" by attacking with two battalions; the 1st Battalion on the right and the 3rd on the left. The objective of the 1st Battalion was the foreleg of the "Galloping Horse". After the objective had been taken the 1st Battalion was ordered to assist by fire the advance of the 3d Battalion on its left. The Reconnaissance Squadron of the Americal Division, one platoon of the 65th Engineers and two sections of the Cannon Company, 27th Infantry, were attached to the 1st Battalion for this operation.

#### 42. PRIOR PLANNING.

a. After extensive and detailed reconnaissance of the front line, as held at that time, the following plan of attack was made. The 1st Battalion, instead of attacking abreast of the 3rd Battalion, would pass through the line held by the 8th Marines on Hill 66, and seize the foreleg of the "Galloping Horse". Not only would this maneuver pocket the enemy troops in heavy woods south of Hill 66 but it would shorten the supply line materially. Further, it would enable this battalion to support effectively the advance of the 3rd Battalion on the left.

b. However, the success of this plan depended on one important point. The ravine crossing between Hill 66 and the objective, must be secured. The Japanese held a strongly fortified area called the "Water-Hole" at the western base of Hill 66. One company of the 2nd Marines was ordered to secure the right (west) flank of the 1st Battalion, as it moved off of Hill 66. Company "B", 1st Battalion 27th Infantry, was to secure the western end of the ravine while the Reconnaissance Squadron was to secure the left (east) flank by placing a security detachment between Hill 56 and the rear foreleg of the "Galloping Horse". After the above blocks were in place the 1st Battalion (less Company "B") would attack from Hill 66, cross the ravine in a column of companies and advance through the woods between the forelegs of the "Galloping Horse" and seize the objective.

#### 43. OPERATIONS.

a. On January 10th the attack was preceded by artillery and aerial bombardments. Beginning at 0550, five battalions of the field artillery began laying exceedingly heavy fire on the "Water-Hole" and the forelegs of the "Gallopig Horse". At 0615, the artillery ceased firing and the navy and army dive-bombers began dropping depth charges on the "Water-Hole". This aerial bombardment lasted until 0635.

b. At the conclusion of the bombardment, "F" Company, 2nd Marines moved to secure the right flank. The Reconnaissance Squadron moved into the ravine between Hill 56 and the "Gallopig Horse's" foreleg. "F" Company was followed by "B" Company, 27th Infantry, with one section of machine guns attached, to secure the draw between Hill 66 and the foreleg of the "Horse". "B" Company and the Reconnaissance Squadron reported in position at 0730. The remainder of the 1st Battalion, in the order of "A", "C", and "D" Companies moved forward between the flank guards. After slight resistance from three Japanese machine guns the objective was captured at 1140. All units were ordered to consolidate their positions immediately, and to prepare an all-round defense. That afternoon a patrol was sent out, and under cover of darkness it contacted the 3rd Battalion on Hill 52. On January 11th the 1st Battalion supported by fire the attack of the 3rd Battalion, knocking out enemy machine guns and points of resistance. On January 12th the 1st Battalion continued to support the 2nd Battalion by fire. Contact was made with Company "G", which moved up its zone of attack at 1000. Direct fire support of 81mm mortars successfully reduced the enemy resistance, allowing the company to obtain its objective. January 13th was spent in patrol activities and the consolidation of all positions.

#### 44. CRITIQUE.

a. Valuable and essential reconnaissance and planning was permitted in this operation due to the early warning order issued by higher authority. A stereoscopic study of the terrain by all officers, who are to make the attack, will clarify many points that may cause difficulty. Communication was maintained by the Battalion Commander between his companies and the Command Post at all times. This was done by using the sound power telephone.

b. Rations, water, wire, and ammunition were brought forward promptly. Twenty-five men from each rifle company were left back at the assembly area to act as a carrying party. These men were supplemented by native carriers numbering seventy-five. In future operations it is believed that the assault troops should not be weakened by carrying parties, unless exceptional circumstances are known. Troops should carry enough rations and water to last them at least forty-eight hours. Sufficient ammunition should be carried to repel a counter-attack. If the situation becomes clear and it is possible to send back carrying parties, this can be done after the objective is seized and organized.

### SECTION III

#### OPERATIONS OF THE THIRD BATTALION

Lt. Col. GEORGE E. BUSH, 27th Inf., Commanding.

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45. PRELIMINARY PLANNING. a. The regimental plan of attack was received on January 5th. The 3rd Battalion was assigned the southern half of the regimental zone-of-action, with the boundary between battalions the southern edge of the woods prolonged westward through the Corps objective which was the "Horse's Head". Preliminary reconnaissance was a terrain study which, along with talks with the occupying unit, formed the basis for the battalion plan of attack.

b. The terrain, as previously stated, was generally open, but rough. On the north side of the zone-of-action was a thick woods for some 1500 yards (three-fourths of the way to the Corps objective). South of the woods (in the Horse's middle) was an open area about 600 yards wide and cut into several steep hills and ridges. South of this open area was a very steep slope, some places very cliff-like, leading down to the Matanikau. The dominating terrain features were Hill 52, Sims Ridge, and Hill 53. Hill 52 dominated the zone-of-action near the center. The area beyond 52 could not be reconnoitered except from aerial photographs. The Battalion Commander of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, reported that Hill 52 would be a hornets nest. Its strength lay in its being natural for defense. Its level crest dominated the approaches leading to it from three sides. Its fourth or southeast side was heavily wooded. Also from the crest a sheer, cliff-like drop gave the defenders excellent cover from all of our fire. They could quickly resume their positions following our fire concentrations. The Marines had made two attacks against it unsuccessfully, the most recent being an attack by their 2nd Battalion two weeks previously which had been repulsed with severe losses. Thus Hill 52 became an intermediate objective. Following its capture the attack would continue to the Corps objective where it would join the 1st Battalion. Bear in mind that initially this battalion's attack was similar to that of an independent battalion in that both flanks were exposed until junction was made with the 1st Battalion on the Corps objective.

c. The plan for attack employed two companies abreast. "I" on the right; "L" on the left; "K" in reserve. A machine gun platoon from "I" Company was attached to each assault company. The 81mm Mortar Platoon and two 37mm guns of the Anti-Tank Platoon would support the attack by fire from positions on Hill 54. As the objective was very strong frontally a double envelopment movement was planned with the base of fire on Hill 54, holding the

attack on Hill 51 and just north thereof, and the reserve being initially on Hill 54. The CP site was selected on Hill 54 with the battalion aid station nearby and a forward supply dump selected in a defiladed position on Hill 54. The Battalion CP was 200 yards from the CP and offered good observation to the north. Company Commanders were given this general plan on January 7th and were able to make extensive reconnaissances. On January 9th the battalion moved to its assembly area on the west bank of the Matanikau at the upper peep bridge. On the afternoon of the ninth, the battalion attack order was issued verbally to the assembled company and platoon leaders at the battalion OP. Immediately following, the company commanders and platoon leaders gave their order for the attack to their non-commissioned officers. Everyone, down to include squad leaders, was able to get a picture of the ground over which they were to fight and make plans accordingly. During the afternoon, communication wires were laid, the ration dump was stocked with Class C rations, and ammunition (small arms, mortar and 37mm). Two anti-tank guns were brought up and placed in firing positions and the 81mm mortars were set up on Hill 54 to support the attack. Plans were made for water to be started up the next day. Everything possible to do prior to the attack was done.

46. OPERATIONS JANUARY 10TH.--a. January 10th was a very hot day. The battalion moved at 0300 from the assembly area. At the top of Hill 55 rolls were dropped. The battalion was in position just in rear of the line of departure at 0530 which was prior to daylight. At 0635 following the aerial bombardment of the water-hole, the battalion moved out in the attack. With the Battalion Commander, the Executive Officer and each company commander was a 536 radio which served well in this open ground. Later on, a sound power line along the right zone-of-action was very valuable. Close contact with the assault units was maintained almost without interruption during the entire day.

b. "L" Company occupied Hill 51 without opposition, leaving a platoon there to cover their left and rear. The base of fire was established on Hill 51. One platoon moved on the left of the open ridge and one platoon was held in support. The assault platoon advanced quickly and unopposed half-way up the hill to their objective when they were suddenly met with enemy machine gun fire on their left flank. This was at 0730. The leading scouts of this platoon advanced so rapidly that an artillery concentration planned on call on the crest of 52 could not be delivered owing to the proximity of our troops. Artillery concentrations were fired but necessarily had to be farther westward. Artillery concentrations on the objective preceding the jump-off should have been included as part of the plan of attack. This would have given both the artillery and our troops advance notice and would have assured softening up of the enemy prior to the assault which, it developed we were not able to deliver. "L" Company's base of fire placed fire on the hill but the assault troops were unable to reach the defiladed positions of the enemy. The assault platoon stayed low. The company commander determined that the precipitous

ground on his left made a flank movement impractical. He sent a message to his assault platoon to withdraw 100 yards so they could place mortar fire close to the crest. The "100 yards" was omitted from the message received by the platoon leader so the platoon came back to Hill 51. Thereafter the company commander continued the attack by fire only from Hill 51, later advising the Battalion Commander to abandon the envelopment on the left owing to the terrain. The stalemate existed for about an hour with no positive action. The mistaken interpretation of the above message should have been corrected--the assault platoon should have reestablished its position and the attack continued.

c. On the right, "I" Company met immediate resistance, mainly from the woods on the north. They had to fight their way along, clearing the edge of the woods of the enemy to protect their further advance in the open and their route of supply. This counter-sniper fire occupied a full platoon all through the day. They moved to within 200 yards of the crest of Hill 52 when enemy fire held them up. "K" Company was then ordered to move past "I" Company, extend to their right and make a deeper envelopment of the enemy position. Artillery, mortar, and 37mm fire was placed on Hill 52 intermittently during this period. Water carrying parties were organized and started water forward. "L" Company was directed to leave one platoon on Hill 51 and to move the remainder of the company along the right flank following "K" Company. They became Battalion Reserve.

d. "K" Company encountered stiff enemy resistance and did not get to the right of "I" Company until 1300, and then they found they had to capture a ridge to secure their rear before making the assault. This was not completed until 1345.

e. In the meantime, a supporting army air bombardment mission was made available. The flight commander came to the battalion OP and was shown the ground target and where Japanese resistance was able to get cover on the reverse of the hill. Not knowing then how the attack in progress would succeed, 1500 was set as the tentative time for the air mission. A smoke shell would be placed on the target to indicate it for his other pilots and also to signal him that he was to proceed with the attack.

f. At 1345, when "K" Company got into position, the new plan of attack was for "I" Company to hold, "K" to maneuver, "L" to be in reserve and furnish rear and flank security, and "M" to furnish the base of fire. The attack was to be preceded by heavy artillery and mortar fire. The artillery was requested to fire on assigned targets. For some unknown reason, the artillery fire requested was held up for one hour and the attack was delayed for that period of time.

g. At 1445, planes were seen in the distance. It was our mission on the way, as planned, and "K" Company was in a position in prolongation of the aerial direction of the attack. The battalion commander immediately called the company commander concerned and told him to move his company back to a covered position out of line of the aerial attack. This he did in the 15 allotted minutes. The battalion commander then called for an artillery smoke shell to be placed on the target. It was delivered quickly but it hit just south of the battalion CP and barely missed nearby elements of the 2nd Battalion on Hill 51. Fearing that the planes would mistake that smoke for their target, the battalion commander directed the Heavy Weapons Company Commander to drop a mortar smoke shell on the target. This was done immediately. It may have been better to call for the 81mm smoke shell in the first place since they were in better position to accomplish it. The six planes made a perfect attack on Hill 52, dropping six depth charges. Two were duds but the other four were well spaced on the reverse crest of Hill 52. Following this, the artillery placed a very effective and heavy concentration on the target. "K" Company moved in on the termination of the artillery concentration and as they assaulted the north and northwestern side of Hill 52, "I" Company assaulted the eastern side. A gap between the two companies was filled by one platoon from Company "L". This was a well coordinated attack which could hardly fail. The battalion intermediate objective was captured at 1625.

h. It was decided to consolidate the Hill 52 positions for the night and resume the attack next day. The Battalion CP group moved forward to Hill 52 and a cordon defense was set up. Contact was made by patrol with the 1st Battalion on the right. Enemy rifle, mortar and artillery fire were encountered during the night, but no organized night attack was made.

47 OPERATIONS JANUARY 11TH. a. The third and last phase concerns the actions on January 11th. The attack was planned for 0900 as it was thought that water could be brought up and canteens filled by that time. This was an error in judgement and very little water arrived with the result that but few men had water when they went into the attack. This later proved disastrous. The attack should have been postponed until we were ready. The plan for this attack was for an artillery preparation to precede the attack following which "L" Company on the right would move to Hill 57, join with the 1st Battalion and then extend south across the neck of the woods to the "Horse's Mouth." "I" Company on the left would attack southwest along Sims' Ridge, leaving a platoon on Exton Hill to secure its left and rear. "K" Company would follow "I" Company and pass thru them and continue on to Hill 53 joining with "L" Company on their right. A machine gun platoon from "L" Company was attached to both "I" and "L" Companies. The 81mm mortars remained in support on Hill 54.

b. Following the artillery concentration the attack moved out at 0900, lacking water. The leading platoon of "L" Company, with one platoon of "M" Company attached, went through a ravine north of Hill 52 and, when moving up the southeast slope of Hill 57 received heavy enemy machine gun fire from the woods to the south. They later found themselves fired upon from three directions and unable to advance so they dug in. At dusk, the remainder of the company not having arrived, these men returned to Hill 52 as the enemy had pulled out.

c. The other companies, in moving up the ravine, met fire from a heavy enemy machine gun position covering a bottleneck. They stayed there and called for artillery and mortar fire and made no real effort to maneuver. Their congestion invited mortar fire which was placed on them inflicting several casualties, among them the Company Commander of "I" Company. The "I" Company platoon succeeded in occupying ground in the vicinity of Exton Hill. They were kept under fire and suffered heavily from heat exhaustion. A period of inertia seemed to obtain throughout the battalion at this time. As the day wore on the men became more thirsty and exhausted and the leaders were lacking the push necessary to put the attack across. It was noted as the going became harder leadership became more important. When things did not run smoothly a forceful leader was essential to pull out of the difficult position. In spite of the heat and the exhaustion that day, the enemy positions could have been overcome if the leaders had shown the push and determination which they had the day before. Very little maneuvering was attempted. At about noon it was apparent that the battalion would be unable to take the objective that day. Orders were given to reoccupy generally the same positions as the preceding night. Heavy fire was met all afternoon from the woods to the northeast and men were unable to dig in until after dusk. This indicated a night attack which did materialize in one platoon's sector, however it was successfully repulsed.

d. The following morning the 2nd Battalion passed through the 3d Battalion in the attack at 0630, following which the 3rd Battalion went into regimental reserve on Hill 55.

46. SUMMARY - - Artillery planned fires should be included in the plan of attack. This give both the artillery and our own troops knowledge of what to expect and they can make their plans accordingly. Also, a fool-proof assurance must be had by the Commander that his troops are ready and properly supplied when they enter combat. And finally, a stalemate or a change in plan due to circumstances calls for action -- either maneuver, placing of fire on the resistance or a change in method by the commander of the unit involved. In any case, decisive action must be taken.

## SECTION IV

### OPERATIONS OF THE 2ND BATTALION

B. F. Evans Jr., Major 27th Inf., Commanding

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49. PRIOR PLANNING. Prior to January 10th, 1943, reconnaissance were made by the Battalion Commander, his staff, and Company Commanders. Avenues of approach were selected to the 1st and 3rd battalion positions, the 2nd battalion being in reserve.

50. OPERATIONS JANUARY 10TH. On January 10th, this battalion moved from a bivouac area on the coast near the mouth of the Matanikau River, to an assembly area near the upper poop bridge on the Matanikau. At 1800, on this date, an order was received from the regimental commander that the 2nd battalion would occupy Hills 50, 51, and 52, upon their capture by the 3d Battalion and also establish a block across the Matanikau River southeast of Hill 50. "E" Company occupied Hill 50 and put in the river block. "F" Company occupied Hills 51 and 52 upon their capture by the 3rd Battalion. "G" Company remained in the assembly area. "H" Company mortar platoon was attached to "I" Company. The remaining available personnel served as carrying parties.

51. OPERATIONS JANUARY 11TH. On January 11th, the dispositions and duties of this battalion remained the same as on the afternoon of the 10th of January. Shortly after noon on January 11th, the battalion commander received an order from the regimental commander that the 2nd Battalion would pass through the lines then held by the 3rd Battalion and continue the attack to the Corps objective. During late afternoon, on this date a hasty ground reconnaissance was made and orders issued for the attack.

General Plan of Attack: Two companies abreast, one in reserve, and "H" Company supporting the attack by fire from Hill 52. The battalion CP was established on Hill 52. Company "G" was to attack on the extreme right of the battalion zone of action and seize as their objective that part of Hill 57 that lay in the battalion zone of action. "F" Company was to attack on the extreme left of the battalion zone of action and seize as their objective Hill 53, the "Horse's Head." The attack at 0630 on the morning of January 12th was to be preceded by an aerial bombardment and strafing attack and by a fifteen minute artillery concentration.



52. OPERATIONS JANUARY 12TH AND 13TH.--a. On the morning of January 12th, the attack moved off as scheduled. "G" Company reached their objective, Hill 57, at 1200 after overcoming resistance in the woods north of Hill 52 and immediately came under enemy fire from a position in the edge of the jungle north of Sims' Ridge. "F" Company maneuvered to the left and gained Exton Ridge. At this point they were stopped by the Japanese. Company "E" was then employed on the left, and was also held up on the south nose of Exton Ridge. Enemy fire was coming from between Exton and Sims' Ridge, from Sims' Ridge, from the jungle between Sims' Ridge and the "Horse's Head," and from a position north of Sims' Ridge. Company "F" was withdrawn from Exton Ridge, crossed the draw north of this ridge and attacked Sims' Ridge from the north. Company "E" attacked frontally along the ridge between Exton and Sims' Ridge, but was unsuccessful. Company "F" had succeeded in taking approximately half of Sims' Ridge. Company "E" was withdrawn from their position and followed "F" Company to Sims' Ridge. The base of fire had been moved from Hill 52 to Exton Ridge, except the 81mm mortars, which remained in position in the rear of Hill 52. Another unsuccessful attempt was made to take Sims' Ridge late in the afternoon of the 12th.

b. On the morning of January 13, 1943 the battalion commander, from a position on Sims' Ridge, gave a new plan of attack. Company "F" was to withdraw from Sims' Ridge, skirt the east edge of the jungle between Sims' Ridge and the "Horse's Head", cross through the southern tip of this jungle and take the "Horse's Head". Company "E" was to take the remainder of Sims' Ridge, move to Hill "D" and connect with "F" Company on the "Horse's Head". An incident worthy of note is the manner in which the opposition on Sims' Ridge was knocked out, Major Charles W. Davis (then Captain), Executive Officer of the battalion, volunteered to lead four men against this opposition, namely: Sgt. Curran, Sgt. Ward, Pvt. Stec, and Pvt. Woodard, all of Company "F". Major Davis and these men wriggled around the side of the hills on their stomachs and approached within ten (10) yards of the enemy machine gun and mortar positions. Two enemy hand grenades were thrown in their midst but failed to go off. Major Davis' group hurled eight hand grenades into the enemy position to soften it up. Major Davis fired one round from his rifle, after springing up, and the rifle jammed. He then drew his pistol and waved the others on with his rifle. Those men jumped into the middle of the Japanese and completely wiped them out. Then Major Davis and his men joined "F" Company and led them through the jungles to the Corps objective. By heroic and determined fighting all objectives had been reached by noon of January 13th. "G" Company sent a platoon to Hill 57 to occupy the jungle between this hill and "F" Company. By dusk of this day this task had been completed and the Japanese encircled. Patrolling was started in the area around Hill 53.

## SECTION V

### ARTILLERY SUPPORT, EIGHTH FIELD ARTILLERY (Period January 10-13)

Lt. Col. WILLIAM W. DICK, Jr., F.A., Commanding.

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53. PREPARATION FOR MISSION.---To accomplish the anticipated missions it was necessary, first to emplace firing batteries in suitable positions; second, to establish the observation and liaison necessary to intelligently control fire; and third, to link these latter agencies, through the fire direction center, to the guns. The batteries and FDC were located near Hill 60, some four thousand yards behind the line of departure. A liaison officer joined each battalion of the 27th Infantry, and another was sent to the regimental CP. A forward observer from each of the three firing batteries joined the front line infantry units, one with each battalion, forming a team with the liaison officer with that battalion. The duties of liaison officer and forward observer were frequently inter-changed due to the fact that the battalion commanders, whom the liaison officers accompanied, usually occupied a fox hole well forward where the only observation existed. Each battalion liaison officer and each forward observer was equipped with a radio (SCR 194, 178, or 511). Wire communication was established to each of the aforementioned parties. Two trunk lines were laid to Hill 66, one of these being parties to the regimental liaison officer. Two trunk lines were also run to a forward switching central on Hill 50. The forward switchboard served the liaison officers and forward observers with the 2nd and 3rd battalions and a battalion CP on Hill 54. Later a third trunk was put into Hill 52. These communications arrangements were considered more than ample. This belief was soon shattered. The heavier radios could not be moved over difficult terrain rapidly enough to keep up with the infantry. The SCR 194 was unreliable. The maintenance of wire lines was a nightmare throughout the entire operation. Following good wire-laying procedure will not insure continuous communication when trees are felled and roads bulldozed after the lines are laid. In future operations of this kind, it is believed imperative that wire maintenance crews be present with each construction gang.

#### 54. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS.

a. The preparation opening the action has been discussed. One point in connection with it might well be emphasized. The fire of six battalions was concentrated in a small area southwest of Hill 66. The necessity for just such a concentration of fire is a primary consideration affecting all phases of artillery employment. For example,

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if artillery is distributed along the entire infantry front, instead of emplaced well to the rear, only a few guns could fire on any given close-in target and the shock effect of massed artillery would be unobtainable.

b. During the remainder of the day the battalion fired on the call of the battalions of the 27th Infantry. In all, thirteen such missions were undertaken. Targets were mostly machine guns and mortars. Adjustments on two targets were very successfully handled by infantry officers employing radio relay. Other calls for fire were received that could not be answered. The first and third battalions of the 27th Infantry were uncertain as to the location of all elements of the other battalion. This condition was later improved by increasing our efforts to get more information and to transmit all of it to all of the artillerymen forward.

c. During the afternoon of this first day, a second preparation was fired. This time it was a five minute concentration by four battalions on Hill 52, preceding its capture by the 3rd Battalion, 27th Infantry. Previously, a number of attempts to neutralize the Japanese on and behind this crest had failed. Due to the crowding of the hill from two directions, it was impossible to deliver any volume of fire with safety. Eventually the infantry units were withdrawn a few hundred yards and an aerial bombardment coupled with a heavy preparation was laid down. Following this, the hill was taken with no great difficulty.

d. On the second day, the battalion was relatively inactive. Only five call missions were requested, these being on the south side of Hill 52 and on the head of the "Horse". A number of additional check points were registered on in the sectors of the 1st and 2nd Battalions in preparation for the operations to be conducted on the 12th. The large amount of registration carried on resulted in the loss of surprise effect but was necessitated by the lack of an accurate map or mosaic, and by an insufficient supply of what various maps and photos were available.

e. The third day was again a busy one. During darkness, three enemy mortar positions located by the 2nd Battalion were fired on. A large scale Corps artillery preparation was placed on Hill 53 and vicinity at 0700. Of particular interest in this connection--a small tip of woods west of Hill 52 was avoided during the fire due to the proximity of elements of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry. The majority of the seventeen additional call missions fired during the day were requested in and around this wooded area where considerable opposition was encountered. It is possible that a withdrawal of part of the 1st Battalion to permit inclusion of this particular area in the preparation would have made the going easier.

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f. Three battalions of the Division Artillery were adjusted on the "Horse's Head". The 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, leaned on this fire and followed it without any time lag. This was a most worthwhile endeavor and marked the development of real infantry-artillery team action.

g. The last day of this phase of the action was busy, although no really heavy fires were delivered. Eighteen missions were fired by forward observers and liaison officers in support of the infantry who were consolidating their hold on the first objective which had been gained.

h. A large part of the afternoon and the next several days were spent in extending our control to the west and the registration on new check points in preparation for the next phase.

## SECTION VI

### SUPPLY AND EVACUATION

Major JOSEPH F. RYNESKA, 27th Infantry,  
Supply Officer.

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55. PRELIMINARY PLANS.---a. From a supply officer's point of view, the reconnaissance at first was very discouraging. The only possible supply route leading to the area was the Marine Trail. To get over this trail required a knowledge of navigation rather than mere driving ability: it was that wet and muddy. Other than that; there was nothing to traverse except swamps, jungles and the Matanikau River, which was not bridged at that time.

b. A regimental DP was established at the junction of the Beach Road and Marine Trail. This was as far as heavy cargo trucks could go. The 3rd Battalion DP was about one and one-half miles from the regimental DP.

c. On January 5th, a company of engineers from the Americal Division began the construction of a jeep bridge across the Matanikau at the 3rd Battalion Assembly Area. This bridge was completed in one day.

d. After the completion of the bridge, these same Engineers started to bulldoze a jeep road up very steep Hill 55. By sundown of January 9th, this road had progressed just to the top of Hill 55.

e. In the meantime Marine Trail had been improved to some extent and the trail had been extended to a point a little beyond the battalion assembly area.

f. On the morning of January 9th, using all available transportation, which included 8 jeeps and two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton trucks, the very arduous task of hauling equipment and supplies from the regimental DP to the battalion DP began.

g. By working the men all day and through the night, enough food and ammunition was ready for the jump-off the next morning.

56. TRANSPORT OF SUPPLIES.---a. On the morning of January 10, all working parties were organized to follow up the attack of the 3rd Battalion with supplies. Working parties consisted of 75 native carriers, our own troops who were not actively engaged in the operations and of course, our 8 very dependable jeeps. As the attack progressed, sub DP's were established. One was established on top of

Hill 55 and one on Hill 54.

b. Enemy sniper fire was very heavy on Hill 54 and as a result the supply line was interrupted temporarily. This difficulty was overcome by building a rope cable system from a defiladed position on the north tip of Hill 54 to another ridge northwest of Hill 54 and a distance of about 350 feet. This method was slow, but enough supplies got to the forward units to sustain them.

57. WATER SUPPLY.--a. Water supply was a great problem throughout the whole operation. In spite of superhuman efforts by all concerned, there never was enough water in the canteens of the forward units. Fortunately, a water point at the foot of Hill 55 had been established and there was plenty of water at the source. Because of a lack of thorough planning in the handling of this most important supply some of our attacking units went into combat on January 11th without any water. This almost proved disastrous as many men dropped out from sheer exhaustion during the attack.

b. The mistake was made in not organizing the distribution of water after it had been carried to the top of Hill 55. Here, rear units would stop the carrying parties and use up all the water before it could get forward to attacking units where it was needed most.

58. FOOD SUPPLY.--a. Food supply was adequate throughout the entire operation. The forward DP's were always close enough so that carrying parties from forward units could come back at any time and get as much food as was needed.

b. A word about the Class "C" Ration. It was indicated during our operations that this ration was not at all popular with the men. They hardly touched the "A" unit and they only ate the confection in the "B" unit and throw the rest away. There was a tremendous waste of this "C" ration.

c. It was found out that the men would much rather drink a prepared bouillon. This bouillon could be prepared at the forward aid stations or by the men themselves during a lull in activity. This bouillon ration is easily carried as it comes in a small cartridge which contains five cubes.

d. In future operations the use of bouillon in lieu of the "C" ration is recommended. It can be easily carried and it contains enough salt to be a substitute for salt tablets.

e. The Class "D" ration was very satisfactory. It was used both as a confection and a drink. More Class "D" ration should be issued for combat.

59. TRANSPORTATION.--a. Transportation was very limited. For this reason transportation was kept under regimental control. The jeeps traveled from sun-up to sun-down over very rough terrain and as a result took a lot of punishment. It was SOP in this regiment to check all vehicles in to Service Company every night.

b. The Service Company constructed a blacked-out repair shop, and as jeeps would come in at night, they would perform all the necessary repairs. At no time during the entire operation was there a jeep out of action. This was a remarkable feat considering the job the jeeps had to do, and it can truthfully be said that this was a huge factor in the success of the operations.

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## SECTION VII

### COMMENTS OF THE DIVISION COMMANDER

60. I am sure that we have all thoroughly enjoyed this presentation and have learned a lot from this action.

I have a few points that I noted as I watched the operation of the 27th Infantry. The first is the danger of smoke signals to designate targets in conjunction with air-support attacks. The attack of the 1st Battalion on January 10th was preceded by an aerial bombardment and artillery preparation. We had arranged ahead of time with the Air Corps that the artillery would mark with smoke a north-south line from the southwest tip of Hill 66 to the left foreleg of the "Galloping Horse." No bombing was to be done east of this line. However, during the artillery preparation which preceded the bombing, either "Pistol Pete" (Japanese artillery) opened fire on Hill 56 or a few rounds fell short there. One landed on an ammunition dump on Hill 56 and started a fire which set up quite a smoke column east of our safety line, so that when the bombardment started, the first bomber that came over, dove east of the line marked by the artillery. Bombs landed on Hill 66 among the 8th Marines. A few minutes later another bomber came in. A depth charge from this plane landed on Hill 55 east of the smoke line. Thank the Lord there were no casualties and that these untoward incidents did not upset the 27th Infantry at the start of its attack. Smoke possibly led these two aviators astray, smoke we had not planned. In the case referred to by Colonel Dick, where the smoke shell fired by the artillery to designate Hill 52 to the aviators fell short, I think it would have been better to have used the mortars on Hill 54, which were only 800 yards from Hill 52, to mark the target. Mortar smoke shell should be used for such short ranges. Artillery smoke shell is much more erratic than high explosive, or at least has been so here. We have had too many short rounds of artillery smoke to warrant its use for designating targets to the air.

The essential coordination that a battalion commander has to exercise between the fire of machine guns, mortar and artillery was ably demonstrated in the attacks of the 2nd Battalion on Exton and Sims Ridges and Hill 53. The Japanese that were holding up attacks of Bush's and Mitchell's battalions were in a swale between Exton and Sims Ridges. There is a precipitous drop-off south of Hill 52 so that our troops could not maneuver to get at the Jap guns which were well placed at the edge of the drop-off. Mortars had to be used on those machine guns, while artillery was placed on Hill 53 which was still held by the enemy, and machine gun fire from Hill 52 and Exton Ridge was placed on the south end of Sims Ridge whenever a target appeared.



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An incident which I think is significant occurred in the handling of the mortar fire which is worth mentioning. Colonel Mitchell was directing fire of these mortars and I was giving him a little help. I noticed a young man on my right flank, and turned to him and said, "Captain, put your fire over here," pointing to a wooded slope southwest of Sims' Ridge from which we had had reports of enemy fire. The man replied "Sir, I'm not a captain," but he proceeded to adjust the mortar fire as directed, and well. A little while later I asked him to shift the fire to another point. This time I demoted him one file and addressed him as "Lieutenant." Somewhat embarrassed, he stammered, "General, I'm not an officer, I'm a Sergeant." It was Sergeant Rex P. Henry of Company H, 27th Infantry who was in command of a section of mortars on the east slope of Hill 52. Hill 52 was a hot spot in more ways than one, but Sergeant Henry, throughout the day, conducted his fire coolly and accurately. He proved that he was thoroughly competent to command a mortar platoon. His regimental commander and I have recommended him for a commission.

Major Davis was very modest in his recital of the events leading to the capture of the Hill at the south end of Sims' Ridge west of Hill 52. I was on Hill 52 throughout this fight and know the part played by Major Davis in this stirring drama. First he volunteered on January 12 to take instructions from Lieutenant Colonel Herbert V. Mitchell, the battalion commander, to the two companies, which were pinned down near the center and north end of Sims' Ridge, for a maneuver to capture the remainder of the ridge. The trip from Hill 52 to Sims' Ridge required Major Davis to advance about three hundred yards through the intermittent cross-fire of Japanese machine guns. The maneuver he directed failed, but Major Davis voluntarily remained with the companies overnight in their exposed position and supervised the consolidation of the position. The next day, after Col. Mitchell had himself gone forward to Sims' Ridge, Major Davis organized and led a party of volunteers that seized the knoll held by the Japanese at the south end of the ridge. First he adjusted the fire of the mortar section which was on Hill 52, using power phone, gradually bringing in its fire onto the knoll until dirt from the explosions was being thrown back on his own men. Then, at a prearranged signal, the mortar fire ceased and Major Davis leaped to his feet to lead the charge of his small party which had crawled on its bellies as close to the knoll as it could get. Davis fired one shot from his rifle which promptly jammed. He then took out his pistol and, while shooting Japs who were still behind the knoll, he waved on his men with his rifle in his left hand. Spurred on by his fearless example the party swept over the knoll and killed its remaining defenders. As he led this charge, Major Davis was silhouetted against the sky in clear view of the bulk of the battalion, as well as the Japs. His action had an electrifying effect on the battalion. The two companies came to life and in short order had cleared Sims' Ridge and were storming Hill 53 and the "Horse's Head", the Corps objective. A half hour later, Colonel McCulloch and I walked forward from Hill 52 to congratulate Colonel Mitchell on the success of his battalion. We found him up on Sims' Ridge,

surrounded by exultant soldiers. But when I shook his hand and congratulated him, he replied with tears in his eyes, like the splendid officer and gentleman that he is: "Sir, it was not me." "It was Davis and his men!" And the men about him echoed that sentiment. Col. Mitchell had himself done a grand job, but there is no question but that Major Davis' dramatic charge was the decisive factor. I have recommended him for the Medal of Honor and hope he gets it.

There is one final point that I wish to cover. As Colonel McCulloch and I walked along Sims' Ridge to Hill 53 we passed through groups of men still exuberant with the thrill of victory. Everyone was telling how he had killed ten Japs single-handed. Men were displaying Samurai swords taken from the dead strewn about that scene of devastation. It was a natural aftermath of a stirring fight. But, no one was giving any thought to cover, of consolidating the position, or of taking steps to meet a possible counterattack. The Japanese were still in strength in the valley of the Matanikau south of Hills 52 and 53 and soon placed mortar fire on the south end of Exton Ridge. Fortunately no one was hit, but it was simply a God-send that "Pistol Pete" did not open up on us from Hill X to the southwest. Colonel McCulloch promptly gave orders to dig in, to disperse and to bring up mortars from Hill 52. We must be on the lookout to see that this condition does not develop again. We may not be so lucky next time. When an objective is gained, company and battalion officers must take steps immediately to push security groups to the front and flanks, to organize the position for defense, and to bring forward ammunition, weapons and water.

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### CHAPTER III, Part 2

#### PLANS AND OPERATIONS OF THE 27TH INFANTRY, JANUARY 14 - 26, 1943.

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#### SECTION I

##### PLANS AND OPERATIONS

Colonel WM. A. MCCULLOCH, Infantry, Commanding.

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61. JANUARY 14TH.--On the jeep road which was completed this date to Hill 52, much of the units travel depended. Company "I", 161st Infantry, attached to the 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry, sent a patrol towards the base of Hill 52 along the valley and met stiff resistance. The same mission was assigned on the 15th and no progress had been made.

62. JANUARY 16TH.--By 1200 the 3d Battalion relieved the 2d Battalion on the Horse's Head and it moved to Hill 55 in reserve. Company "I" established a block between Hill 53 and the river to the south--no contact with the 35th Infantry or the patrol from the 161st Infantry was made. A patrol of the 35th Infantry was reported 250 yards south of the block.

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63. JANUARY 17TH.--Company "C", 161st Infantry, was ordered to clear the valley to Block 52. The 35th Infantry patrol joined the block at Hill 53. The 1st Battalion sent a patrol from Company "A" along the "Snake's Back" and ran into resistance. Company "C" dug in on Snakes Head. The 6th Marines were directed to make contact with the 1st Battalion on the Snake's Head.

64. JANUARY 18TH.--Companies "G" and "H" relieved the Reconnaissance Squadron on Hill 56 at 1050. The regimental O.P. was established on Hill 56 at 1437. Company "C", 161st Infantry reached a point in the valley south of Hill 52.

65. JANUARY 19TH.--The 3d Battalion, 27th Infantry, was relieved by the 2d Battalion, 161st Infantry at 1530 and moved to positions vacated on the "Horse's Forelegs" by the 1st Battalion. By mid-afternoon the 1st Battalion had moved to occupy Hills 87a and 87c.

66. JANUARY 20TH.--On this date the dispositions on the front of the 27th Infantry were as follows: the 1st Battalion occupied the middle of the "Snake's Ridge"; the regimental C.P. was at 69.80-199.19; the 3rd Battalion occupied the forelegs of the "Horse" and the 2nd Battalion occupied Hills 54 and 56, with a block between. Outposts were placed on Hills B and G.

67. JANUARY 21ST.--The 1st Battalion C.P. moved to the middle of the "Snake" and the 3rd Battalion occupied the "Snake's Head"; the 2nd Battalion taking over the "Horse's" forelegs. This movement was completed at 1500. The regimental O.P. was established at 67.55-198.35 at 1555.

68. JANUARY 22ND.--The 1st Battalion jumped off with an objective along the high ground near Hill 87 and was to push on to Kokumbona, if practicable. The 3rd Battalion was to protect the north flank and the 2nd Battalion the south flank of the ridge and assist the advance of the 161st Infantry on the south. The attack was preceded by a 15 minute artillery preparation as the battalion moved out in column of companies. Supporting fires from the Cannon Company, mortars, machine guns and 37mm guns were laid on supposed enemy positions, especially Hill 87, which dominated the "Snake Ridge". At 1300, Hills 87, 88, and 89 were successfully occupied. After a reconnaissance of the positions on Hill 89, and with the approval of the Division Commander, who was present, the Regimental Commander decided to push on towards the high ground east of Kokumbona, and a zone-of-action and objective on Hill 90 was pointed out on the ground and assigned to the 1st Battalion. Companies "A" and "C" crossed the valley and went into position on Hill 90 at 1800. At the same time, Company "B" moved to Hill 91 to protect the north flank. The battalion C.P. and the regimental C.P. remained on Hill 89 for the night. The 3rd Battalion followed closely behind the advance of the 1st Battalion and occupied Hill 88 and part of Hill 89.

Company "K" moved to the eastern slope of Hill 91 to further strengthen the protection of this flank. During the afternoon, the 2nd Battalion followed the 3rd Battalion and occupied Hill 87. Thus, the regiment in column of battalions, was well gathered up for future operations. From Hill 89, it was possible to see portions of the Japanese line resisting the push of the Marines between Hill 89 and the beach and these were brought under enfilade fire. The thrust of the 1st Battalion pocketed the Japanese on the south but left an escape to the west along the Beach road through a defile or over Hills 98 and 99 from the ravine to the east of these hills. Plans were perfected after darkness, and it was decided to close the gap on the west and to continue the advance the following morning. This involved the extension of the right (north) flank of the 1st Battalion to the sea with the 3rd Battalion pocketing the Japanese on the west by occupying Hills 98 and 99 and establishing a block on the beach road at Hill 99w. This placed the 3rd Battalion directly in front of the zone-of-action of the 2nd Marine Division on our right and plans were perfected to prevent supporting fires in that zone from shooting into our positions. Flashes from "Pistol Pete" were plainly visible from Hill 89 after dark as he opened up and through the artillery liaison officer with the 1st Battalion, counter-battery missions were accurately fired.

69. JANUARY 23RD.--On this date, just as the complicated maneuver of the 3rd Battalion was well under way, all supporting artillery and machine gun fire opened up in the zone-of-action on our right, over-shooting the valley east of Hill 99 and overlapping the south boundary of that zone, so that shells and bullets zipped into Hills 90 and 91. The Regimental Commander phoned directly to the Division Commander at once, and explained that the maneuver would have to be called off until these fires were properly confined. Immediate action was urgent in order to head off losses by friendly fires and this was accomplished in a satisfactory manner. The regiment was directed to continue the attack. From Hill 89 it was transmitted by the Regimental Commander, that elements of the 3rd Battalion had reached Hill 99w. The Regimental Commander then directed the 1st Battalion to move on Kokumbona with "C" Company on the right via Hills 99w and 99y and "A" Company on the left via Hill 99k. He then moved cross-country to Hill 90 and contacted the Battalion Commander of the 1st Battalion to further perfect this operation, reaching there about noon. The slope of Hill 90 had to be scaled by crawling on all fours. The bottom of the valley was a devil's den until mopped up and cleared of snipers. In the morning, patrols of the 1st Battalion had been sent out to the high ground above Kokumbona and found no enemy, so the scheme of maneuver contemplated an envelopment from the east and south. This was accomplished at 1510, when platoons of Company "K", Company "C", and Company "A" joined forces at the landing beach of Kokumbona. Company "E" was attached to the 1st Battalion for the final drive and followed Company "A" on the

left. The remainder of the 2nd Battalion followed the 1st Battalion to Hill 90 and protected the south flank by occupying Hill 100 with Company "F", Hill 90 with Company "G" and Hill 97 with Company "H" and the Headquarters Companies. Thus in the afternoon, the 27th Infantry was facing in three directions. The 3rd Battalion successfully blocked the Beach Road at Hill 99w and extended south over Hills 99 and 98. The 2nd Battalion faced a possible threat from the south along Hills 97 and 100 and active forces were still facing the 1st Battalion on the west.

70. JANUARY 24TH.--Company "K" was attached to the 2nd Battalion to continue the drive to the west and followed the Beach Road. Company "E" had Hill 102 for its objective, Company "G" by-passed Hill 100 and occupied Hill 103.

71. JANUARY 25TH.--Company "K" was relieved from attachment to the 2nd Battalion and continued mopping up between Hills 102 and 103. At the same time, the 3rd Battalion had been relieved by the 6th Marines, of protecting the ridge east of Kokumbona and was directed to push on to the Poha River, passing through the 1st Battalion along the Beach Road. This was accomplished in a column of companies and the river was reached at dusk. The 2nd Battalion continued to advance west by passing Company "F", through Company "G" and occupied Hills 105 and 106. Company "E" replaced Company "F" on Hill 100 and Company "G" remained on Hill 103.

72. JANUARY 26TH.--The 6th Marines and the 182nd Infantry passed through our front lines about noon and the regiment assembled at Kokumbona to await transportation to its reserve positions on Hill 69. All units cleared this area on the 27th of January 1943.

73. SUMMARY.--The importance of Kokumbona to the enemy was recognized by the Marines from the beginning of their occupation and plans to capture it were always being considered. Counter-action by the Japanese and lack of manpower denied this opportunity until the arrival of the 25th Infantry Division. By the capture, on the 23rd of January 1943 of Kokumbona and the Poha River valley, the Japanese lost control of the nearest good landing beach on the west front, artillery pieces and positions which were always menacing American troops, supply routes to the south and east which lead to the regions of the Matanikau River, Mt. Austen and Henderson Field, control of the high ground which dominated the narrowing corridor and landing beaches as far as Cape Esperance, their main radio station, and sizeable dumps of flame throwers and ammunitions of all types.

## SECTION II

### OPERATIONS OF THE 1ST BATTALION

Lt. Col. Claude E. Journey, Infantry, Commanding.

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74. PREPARATION FOR THE ATTACK ON JANUARY 22, 1943.--On January 17th, the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, was ordered to outpost the "Snake's Back" west of the "Galloping Horse's" foreleg with one rifle company, and gain contact with the enemy. "C" Company, with one section of cal. .30 heavy machine guns attached, was ordered to occupy the "Snake's Head." "A" Company sent a patrol south along the "Snake's Back" to make contact with the enemy. At about 1300 the patrol gained contact with the enemy in the vicinity of the "Snake's Tail." By the use of radio, the patrol called for a previously arranged artillery concentration on the enemy, forcing them to withdraw. This was the first time that this method of fire control had been used. It worked so effectively that all subsequent patrols maintained communication with the forward OPs and either had an artillery forward observer accompany them or had an overlay showing the artillery concentration.

75. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 19TH.--The remainder of the 1st Battalion moved to the "Snake's Head" and "Back." An all around defense was organized from the "Snake's Mouth" to the middle of it's "Back." The foreleg of the "Galloping Horse" was occupied by the 3rd Battalion of the 27th Infantry.

76. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 20TH.--The 1st Battalion was ordered to outpost Hills 87c and 87g. Hill 87g was occupied without incident. It was reported that the terrain was exceedingly rough, and that it took approximately three hours to traverse the route. This report on the terrain was of particular importance in the subsequent attack. If the 1st Battalion had sent an assault force across this area on January 22nd, instead of down the "Snake's Back" it is extremely doubtful whether the battalion would have made such rapid progress. Hill 87c, however, was strongly defended, and the patrol consisting of a rifle platoon with one mortar squad attached was practically surrounded in the vicinity of the "Snake's Tail." By the use of the sound power telephone this information was immediately known by the Battalion Commander, and another platoon was dispatched to their relief. Also, the artillery forward observer, who was with the patrol, adjusted artillery, on the enemy resistance which then withdrew. Hill 87c was not occupied, due to the dominating characteristic of Hill 87 itself.

77. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 21ST.—The order was received by the Battalion Commander for the attack on January 22, 1943.

78. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 22ND.—On this date the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, crossed the line of departure on the "Snake's Back" at 0630 in column of companies, in the order of Companies "C", "B", "A", supported by Company "D". The artillery preparation began at 0630 and lasted to 0700, when the supporting weapons of the Heavy Weapons Company and the Anti-tank Platoon opened fire. As Company "C" reached the tail of the "Snake" they were held up by three Japanese machine guns. The Company Commander quickly adjusted 81mm mortar fire on them, by using the 511 radio. The machine guns were knocked out, allowing the attack to continue. At 0910 the companies began the assault on Hill 87, in line of companies, with "A" Company on the left, Company "B" in the center, and Company "C" on the right. After the capture of Hill 87, "C" Company was ordered to take Hill 88. When this was done Company "B" was ordered to occupy Hill 88, Company "A" to occupy Hill 87, and Company "C" to take Hill 89. These objectives were seized by 1100, and the battalion was ordered to begin the consolidation of their positions. At about 1400 the order was received to take Hill 90. The companies were immediately relieved by the 3rd Battalion, 27th Infantry, and moved forward. The 1st Battalion made the attack on Hill 90 with "A" and "C" Companies abreast supported by "D" Company, from Hill 89. Company "B" was in reserve. The 8th Field Artillery supported the attack by an excellent barrage. Companies "A" and "C" met some resistance in the draw between Hills 89 and 90. This resistance was in a bivouac area, and it is believed that it included a command post. The two assault companies shot their way through this bivouac area, and seized their objective. It is not known how many of the enemy we killed, inasmuch as we were too pressed for time to stop and count them.

79. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 23RD.—a. On the morning of January 23rd the order was received to take Kokumbona. After patrolling to the front the 1st Battalion, with Company "E" attached, attacked in two columns as follows: Companies "B" and "C", with one platoon of cal. .30 machine guns and one section of mortars attached, attacked on the right, and Companies "A" and "E", with one platoon of cal. .30 machine guns and two sections of mortars attached, attacked on the left. After some resistance Kokumbona was captured by 1530 on the afternoon of January 23rd.

b. The local situation made it necessary for the battalion to defend in all directions, and plans were immediately made for organizing and consolidating the position. Facing the ocean, the companies were disposed from right to left as follows: "B", "C", "A" and "E". A squad was sent to Hill 90 as an outpost. Thus in a day and a half the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, made an attack of about seven thousand yards and captured the Japanese base at Kokumbona. At Kokumbona we discovered and captured numerous guns and supplies, and a few prisoners. The battalion remained in this position until it went into Corps reserve, on January 26th.



80. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS.--a. Many valuable lessons were learned during this operation by all officers and men of the 1st Battalion. They have been and will be the basis of all future training of the personnel of this Battalion.

b. The excellent fire support given the 1st Battalion by the 8th Field Artillery should be noted here. The liaison officer and his detail were untiring in their efforts. Due to the rapid advance wire lines were unreliable and by very efficient work the artillery continued to give effective support by using their radios for communication. Both attacks, first on Hill 87, and then on Hill 90, were excellently supported by artillery fire.

c. The work of the 65th Engineers in rapidly constructing a road from Hill 66 to the Snake enabled us to bring supplies and kitchens to the Battalion on January 20th. This made it possible for us to feed several hot meals to the Battalion, which had at that time been in the front line without hot food for ten days. It is felt that this helped greatly in rebuilding the morale of the men before they jumped off again on January 22nd.

81. CRITIQUE ON OPERATIONS JANUARY 10--25, 1943.--The following critique is for the purpose of correcting the deficiencies noted in the operations of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, during the period January 10--25, inclusive. The fundamental principles as outlined in Basic Field Manuals are sound.

a. Rifle Companies: As a whole the rifle units were excellent in their employment of basic tactical principles. However, deficiencies noted were lack of cover and concealment, the need of training in known distance firing, and further training in the value and application of security, especially at night. It was again brought out that scouts must be men especially trained for their work.

b. Heavy Weapons Company: The selection of positions in many cases gave insufficient protection. Alternate and supplementary positions often were not selected. It was found that training in the weapons must be accomplished by all members of the company. There was a tendency to be too exact and to use too many telephones instead of putting the guns up close and using arm and hand signals. All officers, both in the heavy weapons company and the rifle companies, should be trained to sense mortar and artillery fire.

c. Weapons: M-1 rifle excellent for fighting, no difficulty with malfunctioning. BAR excellent. It is felt that this weapon should replace the LMG when fighting in jungle. LMG excellent when terrain permits its use. HMG excellent. Shotgun excellent for close in fighting. Tommy guns functioned well and were effective. However, recommend for use in rear echelons. 60mm and 81mm mortars both excellent. Hand grenades excellent for close in fighting.

d. Training: More practical tests should be made by battalion commander.

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### SECTION III

#### OPERATIONS OF THE SECOND BATTALION January 21 - 26, 1943

Lt. Col. B. F. Evans, Infantry, Commanding.

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**82. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 21ST.**--The operations of this battalion during the second phase of the operations of the 27th Infantry, were characterized by speed of movement, long supply lines and by repeated successes in reaching intermediate objectives on schedule until the final objective was reached. On January 21, the 2nd Battalion occupied the positions which had been manned by the 1st Battalion prior to their push on January 22nd. Those positions were on Hill 57, "The Horse's Foreleg".

**83. OPERATIONS ON 22ND JANUARY.**---Early on the morning of January 22nd, when the regiment had renewed its push toward Kokumbona, Company "E" was moved to the "Snake's Head" to be readily available if called for by the Regimental Commander. One platoon of Company "G" moved from the southern nose of Hill 57 north through the jungle to the "Snake's Tail." This was a security patrol, investigating the jungle on the left flank of the vital Regimental Supply Line. This mission was accomplished with no enemy resistance. During the morning of the 22nd, the 2nd Battalion was moved to the "Snake" to protect the supply line of the regiment. Due to the rapid advance of the 1st Battalion toward Kokumbona, the 2nd Battalion was ordered, during the afternoon, to move to and occupy Hill 87 by nightfall. This hill was organized for all-round defense by dusk of the same day. During the night, the battalion received several rounds in its vicinity from one of the many "Pistol Pete's". An order was received from the Regimental Commander that night, that at dawn, on the 23rd of January, one rifle company and the heavy weapons company was to move to Hill 91.

**84. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 23RD.**---At dawn on January 23rd, Companies "G" and "H" were moved to Hill 91. "G" Company was ordered to move east to Hill 96 and protect the rear of the Regimental zone-of-action. "H" Company was ordered to organize and defend Hill 91. The remainder of the battalion was to move to the southern slope of Hill 91, when they had been relieved of their present positions by the 2nd Battalion of the 161st Infantry. Company "E", at this time, was attached to the 1st Battalion to assist in their drive to Kokumbona. Later in the day of the 23rd, this battalion was ordered to defend Hills 90-97 and to drive across the jungle between Hills 97-100,

seizing and occupying Hill 100. This move was to protect the left or south flank of the regimental zone-of-action. Company "G" moved from Hill 96 and defended Hill 90. Company "H" and the Headquarters Company of the battalion, extended and defended the ridge running from Hill 90 to Hill 97. Company "F" moved across the draw from Hill 97 westward and, after over-running the Japanese resistance in the jungle, took Hill 100. Approximately thirty Japanese were killed in this move from Hill 97 to 100. This draw proved continuously to be a hot spot.

85. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 24TH.--On January 24th, the 2nd Battalion took over the attack and was to push on westward toward the Poha River. This attack did not jump off until noon of this day because of the problem of supplying the men of our command with food, water and ammunition. Company "E" was released from attachment to the 1st Battalion and Company "K" was attached to the 2nd Battalion from the 3rd Battalion. The plan of the attack was as follows: Company "K" on the right with their left flank extending to Company "E" on Hill 102 and their right flank to the ocean. Company "E" was to attack to the west down Hill 102. Company "G" was to move north from Hill 97 then west through the jungle to 103. Company "H" was to support the attack with mortar and machine gun fire from Hill 97. The objective for this day was a line running north from Hill 103 to the ocean. Company "E" and Company "K" moved off at 1300 and encountered slight resistance until they reached the western nose of Hill 102, then they encountered a strongly organized Jap position defended by automatic fire. Company "E" was unable to advance and Company "K" did not advance because they would expose their left flank to this enemy position. These two companies never advanced past this opposition on the 24th. Company "G" moved into the jungle north of Hill 97 and then westward toward Hill 103. When they reached the dry stream bed north of Hill 100, they were met by part of the same Japanese fire which was holding up Company "E". The Japanese waited until "G" Company was well into their wonderfully camouflaged trap before they opened fire. When the Company Commander of "G" Company found that his unit was outflanked from three sides (north, west, south), he gave orders for his company to withdraw and take a route across Hill 100 thence to Hill 103. After heavy fighting this plan of maneuver was successful. It was during this maneuver that Captain Strock was painfully injured in the arm and side by an enemy grenade thrown at short range. Instead of going to the rear for medical attention, he remained with his company and directed them skillfully over a hazardous route to Hill 103. "G" Company reached its objective after nightfall on the 24th with a day of heavy fighting and rigorous movement behind them.

86. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 25TH.--a. On the morning of January 25th, a regimental attack order was issued. The 2nd Battalion was to attack along the high ground lying to the left of the regimental zone-of-action. Company "E" moved from Hill 102 by way of Hills 90-97 to Hill 100. Company "F" passed through Company "G" on Hill 103 and had as their objective hill mass 105-106-107. Shortly after dusk on the

25th, Company "F" reached the battalion objective and after joining with the 3rd Battalion on our right, our part in the driving of the Japanese from Guadalcanal had been completed. Blocks were established between Hills 97-100, 100-103, and 103-106 as soon as the companies had taken this territory. Blocks in these draws were necessary as the Japanese used them for evacuation purposes.

b. On January 26th, the 2nd Battalion was relieved from their positions and joined the remainder of the regiment at Kokumbona.

87. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS.--a. Chief lessons learned during this campaign were:

- (1) Men must be in the best of physical condition.
- (2) Communications personnel, assigned within companies, must at all times keep telephones and 536 radio dry to insure their functioning.
- (3) Loads of heavy weapons companies should be lightened to allow effective use of fewer weapons.
- (4) Rapid maneuvering and encirclement are tactical "musts". Although the time required to complete a mission may be increased, accomplishment can be better completed and with less loss of life by envelopment of enemy positions.
- (5) Rifle companies should have additional BAR's; they proved to be the backbone around which attacks were built.

## SECTION IV

### OPERATIONS OF THE THIRD BATTALION January 20 - 26, 1943

Lt. Col. G. E. Bush, Infantry, Commanding

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88. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 20TH.--On January 20th, 1943, the 3rd Battalion, 27th Infantry was holding Hill 57 and sending patrols out to the west and southwest. At 1600 the battalion was ordered by the regimental commander to send one company to the Snake's Head, relieving "B" Company, 27th Infantry. This was effected at 1700. All companies reported a quiet night.

89. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 21ST.--On January 21, the remainder of the battalion was ordered to the "Snake's Head." Part of the 2nd Battalion relieved us from Hill 57 and we completed our move to the "Snake's Head" about noon. That afternoon, the Regimental Commander gave the attack order for the next day. This order assigned the 3rd Battalion the mission of securing the right flank of the regiment in its westward advance and joining with the 182nd Infantry on the battalion's right. The battalion, less the right flank security unit, was directed to follow closely the advance of the 1st Battalion. "I" Company was assigned the right security mission. That evening, just before dark, all officers and some key non-commissioned officers made a reconnaissance forward to the 1st Battalion's CP at the "Snake's Middle." While there, the attack order was issued by the 1st battalion commander.

90. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 22ND.--On the 22nd of January, "I" Company moved out at 0700 along the route through the woods to the ridge running east from Hill 87. This was a long route and the march was not completed until 1000, by which time contact was established with the 182nd Infantry on the right. The remainder of the battalion stayed in reserve in a defiladed position southeast of the 1st Battalion CP. At 0930 the 3rd Battalion moved out, southwest along the "Snake", following the 1st Battalion which had reached Hill 87 and was pushing on to Hill 88 and Hill 89. The battalion was joined by "I" Company on Hill 87 and pushed on to Hill 88 and taking up temporary positions on that hill. At about 1500 the order was given to move forward to Hills 89 and 91 to reinforce the position of the 1st Battalion. At dusk the battalion was in position as follows: "K" Company on the east was on Hill 91 joining with "B" Company. "L" Company and one platoon of "M" Company was on the eastern knob of Hill 89 and the remainder of the battalion was on the east side of Hill 89. The

battalion CP, as well as that of the Regimental Commander, was on the east side of Hill 89. During the late afternoon, the regimental commander ordered that on the following day the 3rd Battalion would move to Hill 90 and thence northeast to Hills 88 and 99, securing them, establish a block across from the top of ridge 99 to the sea, and to pocket the enemy by blocking his passage to the west across Hills 98 and 99.

91. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 23RD:--On the morning of the 23rd, "I" Company, with one machine gun platoon attached, moved across to Hill 90, meeting some enemy resistance in the deep gulch between Hills 89 and 90. They then moved northeast along Hills 98 and 99 and blocked those ridges against the passage of any enemy. "I" Company followed them and extended the ridge block to the southwest. "K" Company crossed then between Hills 91 and 90 and formed on "I" Company extending the block farther to the southwest. At about 1500, one platoon of "K" Company, as a right flank security for the 1st Battalion, moved north along ridge X to Hill 98 and participated in the occupation of Kokumbona by the 1st Battalion. "I" Company later on that afternoon, set up a very strong block to the sea and during the night killed at least 50 of the enemy trying to pass through the block. The story of this action is interesting. The officer commanding Company "I", placed his company and the machine gun platoon from "M" Company, which was attached to him, in excellent positions and sighted in his automatic weapons before darkness. During the night the Japanese came down the trail not suspecting the existence of the block. They were talking, some had flashlights, and some were pulling a 37 mm rapid fire gun. The company commander, near the middle of his line, held the fire of his men until the enemy was within 10 yards of them and well silhouetted, by reason of the fact that our men stayed low in their foxholes. When they did open fire they had a perfect target and the Japanese suffered heavily. Those Japanese remaining pulled back and later tried to move through higher up the ridge. They likewise ran into heavy crossfire and grenades. The following morning 50 Japanese were buried by "I" and "M" Companies. Besides, large stores of ammunition and some arms were captured. Surprise was responsible for these results and the fact that they had to hold fire until they could see the enemy at night indicates a degree of control and cool-headedness which the men had gained since the start of the operations. The other companies were in position on Hills 98 and 99 during the night and only slight enemy resistance was encountered. Some rifle and mortar fire was directed against battalion positions as well as some close firing by the enemy artillery. This was the heaviest enemy artillery yet encountered. The Artillery Liaison Officer placed some counter-battery fire on them effectively and quickly.

92. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 24TH, 25TH AND 26TH:--On the 24th, "K" Company was ordered to Kokumbona and attached to the 2nd Battalion in its attack westward. One company of the 147th Infantry took over the sector formerly held by "K" Company. The rest of the battalion occupied the same positions as the night before. During the afternoon a battalion of the 6th Marines joined the 3rd Battalion on Hills 98 and 99. Another quiet night was spent. The following day the

order was given to turn the sector over to the 6th Marines. Apparently there was a misunderstanding concerning the relief order for it didn't get down to the Marine battalion commander and as a result delayed the battalion's arrival in Kokumbona by about one hour. The battalion commander of the 6th Marines was willing to take over but said he couldn't without an order from his commanding officer. There was still some activity going on in the woods east of Hill 99 and as the block was set up by order of the corps commander, it could not be abandoned until some unit became responsible for it. After much searching the executive officer of the 6th Marines was reached and he ordered one of their battalions to take over. The battalion arrived in Kokumbona about noon of the 25th and the order was received from the regimental commander to continue the attack westward immediately and secure the line of the Poha River, joining up on the left with the 2nd Battalion on Hill 105. This objective was about 2000 yards west of Kokumbona. "K" Company reverted back to the 3rd Battalion. The battalion moved out immediately to where "K" Company was in position near the beach some 500 yards northwest of Kokumbona. Getting the local situation from "K" Company's Commander, continuation of the attack was planned as follows: "K" Company would place a block between Hills 102 and 103 and pocket the enemy south thereof. The remainder of the battalion would advance in a column of companies in the following order: "L", "I", Headquarters, and "M". The leading company would advance on a frontage of 300 yards with their right resting on the shore line. The advance moved out from the front then held by "K" Company at 1330. The advance moved out from here rather slowly due to the thick jungle on the southern flank. However "L" Company, by this method, flushed out and killed several of the enemy. At 1600, the advance was only halfway to the Poha River, and it was realized that it must continue more rapidly. "I" Company passed through "L" Company on a narrower front of 100 yards. "L" Company followed "I" Company, when passed through. The narrow front speeded up the advance. More enemy were met and killed by "I" Company. At 1730 the Poha River was reached. Permission was obtained to establish a cordon defense on the west side of the Poha River that night at a point about 300 yards west of its mouth. This was completed by dark. During the advance, a total of 35 Japanese were killed and about 800 cases of ammunition of various caliber were captured as well as two 3 inch guns, 3 trucks, a motor park, a range finder, an ordnance repair truck, 5 landing barges and numerous rifles. At 0700 on the morning of January 26th, contact was made with the 2nd Battalion on Hill 105 and at 1100 the battalion was relieved by the 6th Marine Regiment and the 182nd Infantry. When relieved, the battalion went to Kokumbona in Corps Reserve.

## SECTION V

### SUPPLY OPERATIONS OF THE 27TH INFANTRY

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93. PRELIMINARY PLANNING.--In the operations of January 20th-26th we were able to supply the entire regiment by one supply route since the regiment was in one general area. During our earlier reconnaissance, our battalion supply DP was spotted just east of Hill 66 in a well defiladed area and adjacent to Skyline Trail. The 1st Battalion reached its objective very quickly on January 10th. From that time to the next push there was plenty of time to organize and coordinate supply. The battalion was more or less stabilized in the positions which it had taken on January tenth. Prior to the jump-off on January 22nd a jeep road was in the process of being constructed over the area called the "Snake." Expecting a long campaign, our carriers, numbering over four hundred, carried all supplies possible to the tail end of the "Snake." The plan prior to the jump-off was to establish a large DP as far forward as possible. Our carrying parties were divided into groups. The number of water cans in the regiment was to determine the number of men who were to carry water. Many cans had been lost in the previous operation and at this time there were only two hundred and ten on hand. One hundred and ten men carried ammunition and approximately seventy-five carried rations. Carrying parties were well organized and when the 2nd and 3rd Battalions moved up into this area all the carrying parties were consolidated because, at the time, only one supply route was being used. There was a fairly good jeep trail which extended all the way to the top of Hill 66 and to a point on its southern tip where a forward DP was established. Also, very long cable systems were laid to the troops on the forelegs of the "Horse." This was the only way supplies could be sent to them because the slopes on both sides were extremely precipitous.

94. WATER SUPPLY.--The biggest problem was water supply, but this time it wasn't as alarming as it was in the previous operation. The main trouble was getting back and forth from the water point which was located about a mile down the Valley Trail. Traffic was so heavy on this trail that the roads were always under mud. Water tankers were stuck time and again and it was only with the use of bulldozers that the water tankers were able to be brought forward at all. Once they arrived on the Skyline Trail though, there was no trouble getting water up to the troops. The men were given hot meals whenever practicable. The Class "C" ration was supplemented with some Class "B".

95. OPERATION OF THE SUPPLY PLAN.--On the morning of the jump-off, organized carrying parties followed behind the 1st Battalion. An ammunition and ration dump was established midway between the "Snake's"



tail and Hill 87. Water carriers continued on the work with the troops as they advanced. Their orders were to come back to the "Snake's" tail with the empty water cans as soon as the troops used the water up. After reaching Hill 87, the troops moved so fast that they got way ahead of the supply line. On the night of January 22nd the troops had advanced to Hill 89. Another dump was established at the foot of Hill 89. This dump was for food and ammunition only. It was decided that it would be very impractical to carry supplies from the "Snake" to Hill 89 which was a distance of about two miles and over extremely rough terrain. It was humanly possible to make only one trip a day with a load and it was doubtful whether the men could do this for many successive days.

96. USE OF LIGHTERS,--At noon, January 23rd, the troops were in Kokumbona and supplies began to be shipped by sea. The division had already contacted the Navy for use of lighters to carry supplies. That night, January 23rd, the S-3 and S-4 formulated plans for an expeditious unloading of supplies the next morning. One hundred men were detailed on the beach at Kokumbona. The lighters were unloaded as soon as they reached the shore. The Division had arranged for the detail to furnish the loading at Kukum. In the morning of January 24th at 1015 two lighters left Kukum carrying twenty-six tons of supplies. The beach was identified by using white Air Corps panels. The unloading details were ready and waiting. There were no difficulties in unloading at Kokumbona. The trip from Kukum to Kokumbona took one hour and fifteen minutes. The unloading time was one hour and twenty-five minutes. In the meantime arrangements were made to evacuate the wounded into Kokumbona to wait for transportation back as soon as the lighters were unloaded. The litter bearers should be commended very highly for the splendid job they accomplished in carrying wounded men to Kokumbona over extremely rough and precipitous terrain. On our return trip nine prisoners and twelve casualties were evacuated. At this time the Navy did not consider it safe to make another trip. An error was made in the first lighter operation in that we carried no "C" or "D" rations. The Regimental Commander, after taking Kokumbona, sent out numerous patrols and if it had not been for the fact that they were well fed before they left they might have been in dire straits. On January 25th, the two lighters were again used. This time carrying enough "C" rations to sustain one regiment and one attached battalion for two full days. Also, three 37mm guns and four 75mm howitzers, with ammunition, water; and "B" rations were transported. On the afternoon of January 26, the regiment was relieved by the 6th Marines and the 147th Infantry Regiment.

## SECTION VI

### THE ARTILLERY SUPPORT BY THE EIGHTH FIELD ARTILLERY

Lt. Col. William W. Dick, Jr., Commanding.

97. OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 20TH TO 26TH.—a. The artillery activities of this period followed the pattern set in the first phase of the operations. Forward observers again handled the bulk of the fires and division artillery preparations were employed on major points of resistance. There was a large increase in the amount of night firing. Enemy installations located by the infantry patrols during the day were fired on at irregular intervals throughout the hours of darkness. To get ready for the attack of January 22nd, certain changes were made in our positions. The main artery of wire communication was shifted from the "Horse" to Hill 66 and the "Snake." Survey and registration were extended to Hills 87, 88, 89 and beyond. Excellent oblique photos were received, however in insufficient number, and these materially assisted the forward observers in designation of targets. For the attack of the 22nd no preparation was called for in the Division Order. However, the 27th Infantry requested all possible fire on Hill 87 and the ridges east thereof, to precede their jump off. Three additional battalions were obtained and the four battalions delivered very heavy fire. The 8th Field Artillery fired at the rate of 14½ rounds per gun, per minute.

b. The unexpectedly rapid advance of the 27th Infantry necessitated a displacement of the battalion on the afternoon of the 22nd. By scraping up all possible transportation within the Division Artillery, twenty vehicles were procured to begin the movement. That night an additional eight trucks were obtained from the Quartermaster. One hundred and fifty vehicles are normally used in moving a battalion. The move was completed, and the battalion fired from Hill 66 at daylight the next morning. During the period when the battalion was out of action, its missions were ably handled by the 64th Field Artillery through the 8th Field Artillery forward observers and liaison officers.

c. The communication set-up on Hills 88 and 89 on the afternoon of January 22nd was interesting and illustrated the flexibility of American Army methods. For an hour or two, the only available wire line to the rear was an artillery circuit on Hill 89. This line carried Artillery, Infantry, Engineer, and Division traffic until other lines were brought up. When it was decided to continue to push to Kokumbona, the regimental commander of the 27th Infantry requested fire on the wooded area west of Hill W, to cover the advance of the 1st Battalion north along the fingers extending from Hill 89. Our wire had not reached Hill 89 and the 511 radio of the liaison officer suddenly refused to function. An Infantry battalion commander had his 511 available. Using this cavalry set, assigned to the infantry and operating on an artillery frequency, the fire was adjusted. At one and the same time, on this single set communication was possible to one battery still in position, to the 64th Field Artillery, all this while three officers of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry were carrying on other business.

d. At this point it should be emphasized that in requesting artillery support, all available information possible should be given regarding the targets. A call such as "Request fire on point 300 yards short of check point Q" will get fire there, but it won't be the best fire. It may even be totally ineffective. That call can be answered in over fifty widely different ways. In heavy jungle with trees 100 feet tall or higher, shells with quick fuze will burst in the tree tops and produce little effect. Delay fuze will penetrate 40 feet or more before detonating. Conversely, a delay fuze, in the open, causes the shell to dig in and produce few effective fragments. If the target lies beyond a steep slope, it can be reached only by high angle fire, whereas on level ground, or on a forward slope, the more accurate low angle fire would be employed. If the target is mobile, it should be attacked by firing through a zone; if stationary fire at a single center elevation is better. If the target consists of a 20 or 30 man patrol, a battery can do the job, while for a battalion assembly, the entire Division Artillery would be appropriate. The S-3 of the FDC cannot see the target, yet he is charged with delivering the fire requested and needed. He should be given all the data in order to make an intelligent decision.

e. The most interesting and one of the more important artillery tasks falls to the forward observer. Above all others he needs to be battle-seasoned. During the operations, 20 out of the 29 battalion officers were given an opportunity to function as forward observer or liaison officer for periods lasting from three days to a week.

## SECTION VII

### THE FORWARD OBSERVER'S REMARKS

1st Lt. Eugene F. Shiels, 8th F. A.

98. SUMMARY OF REMARKS BY THE FORWARD OBSERVER. a. In all operation the 8th Field Artillery Battalion kept four liaison officers and three forward observers with the 27th Infantry. A liaison officer's post is with the infantry battalion commander—a forward observer's duty is often with the front line company of the battalion. I was a forward observer during the period January 15th to 21st. The action of the 1st Battalion, of the 27th Infantry during the movement from the "Horse's" hoof to Hill 89, covers that period. The operations both of the infantry and the artillery were routine up until the 20th of January with an occasional call mission and improvement of artillery data by the additional registration and harassing fires at night. On the evening of January 19th, the 1st Battalion was notified that occupation of a line of departure for an attack on Hill 89 would be carried out the next day. "A" Company was to move into a position on the south finger of Hill 89. "C" Company was to occupy the middle finger, and "B" Company was in reserve. Since the liaison officer was available to the infantry battalion commander and since observation was so poor, the forward observer went out with a company patrol so that he might learn by first hand observation the location of the enemy and the nature of the ground, thereby facilitating the accurate adjustment of fire. Communication with the FDC and Ln 1 was by 511 radio. The patrol commander had a 536 radio. An enemy force consisting of two or three MG's and some knee mortars was contacted just beyond the tail of the "Snake" at a point known to the artillery as concentration Queen. A short skirmish ensued after which the patrol dug in and held its ground. By this time the rain was coming down in torrents. Since the infantry's 536 would not work satisfactorily, the battalion commander was notified of the situation by the artillery 511 radio. Thus the artillery was furnishing not only fire power but also communication. Reinforcements were sent forward with a sound power phone and the patrol advanced about 400 yards farther up the hill where contact was again made with the enemy. The patrol, which now consisted of a reinforced platoon, was halted by fire from an enemy patrol to the front. Then the Japanese cut loose with automatic fire from the woods to our left, the woods to the front, and the woods to the right. Upon being notified of the situation, the battalion commander ordered the patrol to withdraw to the tail of the "Snake." But there was one difficulty--the automatic fire from the right flank commanded the only withdrawal route. The solution then was to knock out the MG's on the right and withdraw defiladed from the left and front. Artillery was the only answer. It was impossible to contact the FDC with the 511 since it had been drowned out by the recent downpour. Telephone communication was out as both lines from the switchboards on Hill 66 had been pulled out by a truck. The sound power phone was the only remaining communication. The fire mission would have to go to the 1st Battalion of the

infantry regiment, to the infantry division, the division artillery, the 8th Field Artillery Battalion and then finally to our FDC. The request for fire was as follows: "Concentration Queen is 300 short, enemy patrol in open, request battalion." With this information the fire direction center fired a salvo from one battery. The salvo was sent as: "Target, fire for effect." Needless to say the MG's on the right flank were silenced and the patrol withdrew without further casualties. This one example demonstrates several cardinal principles which should be observed by artillery FO's. Intimate knowledge of the plan and disposition of supported troops; precise information of the terrain; numerous check concentrations whose exact location must be known so that fire can be brought down quickly and accurately despite poor observation at the moment; and lastly, a working knowledge of the existing communication net which can be used in case of artillery wire and radio failures.

b. To summarize, the ~~problems~~ of the forward observer fall into two main headings: (1) Observation -- observation of the enemy; observation of supported troops; and observation of artillery fire. (2) Communication -- communication with the supported infantry units and communication with our own fire direction center. In general, excellent cooperation existed between the artillery and the infantry. However, numerous times the artillery was delayed and in some cases were prevented from delivering quick accurate fire because of insufficient information regarding the location of friendly units. In future operations of the division this fault will no doubt be remedied by improved communications.

c. The 511 radio or something similar should be furnished to artillery observers in lieu of the 194. A radio is considered by the Japanese as a high priority target. Since the 511 can be put into operation rapidly and taken down rapidly, ~~and far outranges the 536,~~ it seems to be a logical choice.

## SECTION VIII

### 99. COMMENTS OF THE DIVISION COMMANDER

I want to stress the difficulty of coordination with adjacent units. Colonel McCulloch has talked about the Marines firing on the ridge of Hills 90-98-99, east of Kokumbona. We had made definite plans with corps for changing the boundary of the division from Hill 87 to include this ridge in our sector. The Marine-American Division headquarters had been notified the day before of that change of direction, and it was pointed out that we would cut off the Japs in front of that division if we took Kokumbona. Nevertheless, for some reason or other, the information did not get down to front-line troops until the next day, and our troops were fired on.

The next point is the necessity for having flexible plans, and flexible minds, so that we are not caught short when a plan is changed. You will recall that the plan of attack on the hill mass 97-98-99 involved a holding attack by the 27th Infantry from the east while the 161st Infantry, from Hills X, Y, and Z, was to attack across to Hill 87-V to cut the Jap's rear. When, early on the morning of January 22nd, from the division CP, I saw the attack of the 27th Infantry advance over Hill 89 so rapidly, I changed the whole plan of the division attack at once and directed the 27th Infantry to continue the attack to the northwest and the 161st Infantry to send only its leading battalion across the jungle to 87-V while the remainder of the regiment followed the 27th Infantry. This was a change in plan which called for a readjustment of artillery support, boundaries, missions, and what not. I went forward along the "Snake" to carry these instructions to Colonel McCulloch who was up front. I found him on Hill 89. The 1st Battalion had started to dig in on Hills 88 and 89 and the intervening ridge. Colonel McCulloch gave instructions to Colonel Journey to move out at once to the attack on Hills 90, 90A and 97. Most of the 1st Battalion had dug into the coral which covered the hill-top. Yet, the men cheerfully stopped work, got their equipment and went forward again; which, in my opinion, was a grand indication of their morale. They were ready to stop work and go forward in a new attack. We had the Jap on the run and I didn't propose to let him get away. There was no crabbing when the plan was changed. The plan was changed to take advantage of the situation. We must all school ourselves to expect such changes. I assure you we will not change any division plan unless it makes sense.

I want to again express my admiration for the work of the 65th Engineer Battalion which pushed a road not only up to the Snake, but up Hill 87-F, and down the ridge to the foot of Hill 89. It was a remarkably fine job. At the same time I want to again commend the men of the 27th Infantry who evacuated the wounded from Hill 89 by hand litters on the afternoon before the road was completed. They could not go the short way as the ground would not permit it. It was therefore

necessary to go the long way around, a total three miles back to the aid station.

I also want to commend Lt. Shiel on his presentation of the duties of a forward observer. Listening to Lt. Shiel talk, an inexperienced person might say that it was easy, nothing to it. What else could he do? But it takes close teamwork, trained officer personnel, and trained communication personnel to make forward-observation work. It doesn't just happen. Lt. Shiel was right when he said you can make it work only when you are right on the front-lines. But the forward observers and liaison officers must be kept informed of the plans of the infantry. You must know one another's positions and problems. You must see that each side of the infantry-artillery team is completely informed.

## CHAPTER IV

### OPERATIONS OF 35TH INFANTRY

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## SECTION I

### OUTLINE OF PLANS AND OPERATIONS

Colonel R. B. McCLURE, 35th Infantry, Commanding.

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100. ORDERS AND PRELIMINARY MOVEMENTS.---a. After relief by two battalions of the 161st Infantry, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 35th Infantry, moved out of their positions in the vicinity of Bloody Ridge and proceeded to the first Staging Area located just west of the Lunga River. On the morning of January 7th while the 2nd and 3rd Battalions were marching to the second Staging Area on Wright Road, the 1st Battalion was relieved from their position on the Perimeter Defense and moved to first Staging Area. The regiment was thus in a column of battalions, the 3rd in advance followed by the 2nd and 1st Battalions. At 1600 on the 7th, the battalion commanders, together with certain staff officers and the battalion commander of the 64th Field Artillery, received from the regimental commander the Field Order which follows in part:

"1. The enemy is believed to occupy Hills 43 and 44 with perhaps a defensive position west of Hill 27. Enemy capabilities are believed to be generally defensive with infiltration by small groups armed with automatic weapons.

2. The 25th Division will attack as of 0635, 10 January and seize and hold objective previously announced.

3. The 35th Infantry will attack as of 0635, 10 January in its sector as follows:

- a. 1st Battalion - Regimental Reserve.
- b. 2nd Battalion - To hold the line now held by the 132nd Infantry, to maintain constant contact with the enemy on its front and to contact the 182nd Infantry on its right.
- c. 3rd Battalion - To advance south of Hill 27, seize and hold Hills 43 and 44."



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NUMBER NND 735017, BY RB/HSW, DATE 2/22/94

b. Briefly, the 2nd Battalion was to contain the enemy in the pocket atop Mt. Austen while the 3rd Battalion, followed by the 1st Battalion, was to encircle the Japanese right flank and cut off his line of supply and retreat. To successfully accomplish this mission, the utmost secrecy was required, and to insure this secrecy the 3rd Battalion marched out of their bivouac area at 0200, January 8th, and entered the jungle trail southeast of Hill 34 an hour later. The trail had been lined with ropes the evening prior, but extremely difficult footing slowed up the advance and daylight came before the end of the column had disappeared into the jungle. However this delay in no way affected the security of the move because the route was in complete defilade to the Japanese positions. The 2nd Battalion followed the route of the 3rd Battalion to a point 500 yards southeast of Hill 27 where the column headed west to the rear of the positions occupied by 132nd Infantry. January 9th the relief of the 132nd Infantry was completed at 0600 by the 2nd Battalion while the 3rd Battalion advanced to their jump-off point 1200 yards southwest of Hill 27, sent out reconnaissance patrols, and the 1st Battalion occupied the 3rd Battalion bivouac of the previous night. By darkness on the 9th, all battalions were in position for the attack. The 2nd Battalion with the 25th Division Reconnaissance Troop attached contained the enemy in the "Gifu" Strong Point; the 3rd Battalion was in the jungle on the Japanese right flank; and the 1st Battalion was about one-half days march to the rear of the 3rd Battalion, prepared initially to assist either battalion.

c. From the administrative and supply side of the picture, the pre-attack period was the critical time for the Regimental Staff. A forward regimental command post was established on Hill 27 near the regimental observation post. This vantage point afforded a birds-eye view of the area of operations and enabled the regimental commander to have at his fingertips at all times the situation of the moment. The forward command post was operated by the S-2 from January 9th to January 27th, inclusive.

d. Supply and evacuation was handled by the S-4 in conjunction with the regimental surgeon, an important feature being the incorporation of native bearers in a quasi-military company under the command of C.W.O. Burgess. The plan contemplated that bearers would carry rations and ammunition on the ingoing trip; that they would carry and assist wounded on the outgoing trip. To supplement native carriers, the S-4 planned on the use of air delivery to the 3rd and 1st Battalions, after they reached their objective, until the route of the Matanikau could be placed in operation. Once the attack began, the regimental burden of control fell upon the shoulders of the battalion commanders and their staffs.

101. OPERATIONS.--a. At 0635 January 10, the 3rd Battalion began its envelopment. From information brought in by patrols, the initial line of march was on an azimuth of 210 degrees from the bivouac area. Company "K" at the head of a column of companies, cut the trail for

1000 yards on this bearing, at which time the point of the advance was on a hill mass that afforded limited observation of the Sea Horse, the battalion objective. Now well around the Japanese right flank, Company "K" put out patrols to the west and northwest to reconnoiter further routes of advance. Patrols to the west located a faint trail that continued to the west. Patrols to the northwest brought back the information that they had sighted a small Japanese bivouac in a gulch, that a supply party was halted on a trail to northeast, and that the Japanese were completely unaware of the presence of American troops. The battalion commander immediately ordered Company "K" to attack the supply line, secure it against counterattack and continue toward the objective. At the same time, Company "L" began to advance on a parallel route taking advantage of an old track. Company "I" moved up to a position in battalion reserve, prepared to follow either Company "K" or Company "L", depending on which route offered the fastest advance to the objective. It was then 1300 and in order to reach the objective by darkness, the two attacking companies pressed home their attack. The Japanese supply party, caught by surprise, was wiped out and Company "K" made the ascent to the high wooded portion of Hill 43 (known within the regiment as Payne Hill), encountering sporadic resistance all the way. The Japanese, realizing their serious plight, quickly organized a counterattack to reopen the supply route. The attack was unsuccessful and at 1700 the gulch was secured by Company "I", Company "L" having contacted Company "K" and organized the controlling ground 400 yards southwest of the Sea Horse. Darkness prevented further advance towards Hills 43 and 44. The 1st Battalion, following the trail of the 3rd Battalion, had closed the gap between the two battalions and at 1900 was in physical contact with Company "I". At dawn on the 11th, the attack was renewed along the 400 yard ridge that separated the 3rd Battalion from the Sea Horse. Company "K" was in the lead. Company "L", while covering the battalion left flank, pushed out on a ridge 150 yards to the northwest, and Company "I", in the gulch was relieved by the 1st Battalion and went into battalion reserve. From the increasing resistance, it became apparent that the Japanese were in a critical position and that time was on our side. Hence, Company "K" advanced rapidly, hammering the enemy delaying force to the crest of Hill 43 and overrunning the objective at 1300. Under the coordinating direction of the regimental executive officer, the 1st Battalion took over the positions held by Companies "L" and "I", permitting the 3rd Battalion to organize the Sea Horse. When darkness fell on the 11th, the encirclement of the Gifu Strong Point on the top and western slope of Mt. Austen had been completed and all routes of Japanese escape were cut off.

b. January 12th the 1st Battalion assumed the brunt of the attack, extending their line west toward the division objective. Resistance was strong and 600 yards west of the high wooded ground of Hill 43, the advance was temporarily arrested by point blank Japanese artillery and light mortar fire. With terrain restricting maneuver, artillery and 81mm mortars gave invaluable aid in blasting the opposition.

c. Two days later, January 15th, the 1st Battalion invaded a large Japanese bivouac area, capturing a 70mm gun, a number of prisoners and considerable quantities of Japanese ammunition and supplies. This was the last effective Japanese force blocking the battalion and at 1725, January 16th, the 1st Battalion reported that they were on a precipice overlooking the Matanikau, identified the following morning as the division objective.

d. During the time that the 1st and 3rd Battalions were supplying the encircling element of a successful attack, the 2nd Battalion in their position on Mt. Austen contained the enemy in the Gifu Strong Point with a forceful holding attack.

e. This ended the first phase of the regimental attack.

## SECTION II

### OPERATIONS OF 3RD BATTALION

Lt. Col. WILLIAM J. MULLEN, JR., Commanding.

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102. ORDERS.--At about 1600 on January 9th, 1943, the 3rd Battalion, 35th Infantry, bivouacked on a ridge southeast of Hill 27, received the regimental attack order, which in substance ordered the battalion to make a wide envelopment with Hills 43 and 44 as the battalion objective. The battalion was also to make and maintain contact with the 161st Infantry at the river block on the Matanikau River below Hill 50. Secrecy was to be stressed.

103. RECONNAISSANCE.--a. An aerial photo was studied and a reconnaissance made. From the high ground near the bivouac it was possible to see the grassy slopes of Hills 43 and 44, also numerous ravines and thick jungle between the position and the battalion objective. From the high ground near the 3rd Battalion bivouac area a high wooded hill was visible just south of Hill 43. From the aerial photo and by observation it appeared that this high wooded hill and Hill 43 were one hill mass connected by a narrow ridge. It was decided to make the high wooded hill which was the hilly terrain feature the first objective. Once gained the way to the grassy part of Hills 43 and 44 could be more easily traversed.

b. This decided, the next questions were those of time, covered routes and blazing a trail through the jungles and gulches. Reconnaissance patrols from "K" Company were sent out to find a route of departure for the morning jump-off, a route which would keep us away from the Japanese known to be in the pocket west of Hill 27.

104. SECRECY OF MOVEMENT.--Secrecy had been stressed and as it was believed possible that the Japanese in the vicinity of Hill 27 may have seen the battalion, it was planned to have "I" Company spread out over the whole bivouac area to give the impression to the Japanese that the whole battalion was still in place at daylight. The rest of the battalion formed in the dense woods in a concealed position prior to the jump-off on the morning of the 10th.

105. OPERATIONS.--a. At 0635 on the 10th of January the battalion set out into the jungle in a column of companies--"K", "L", Headquarters, with "I" Company to follow as soon as the 1st Battalion reached the bivouac. Arrangements had been made with the commanding officer of the 1st Battalion to relieve "I" Company by 0800 with a company of the 1st Battalion.

b. About noon the battalion reached the high ridge overlooking the east branch of the Matanikau. Again patrols were sent out to look for an approach to the battalion objective which could now be seen. Two routes were found and a patrol sighted the first Japanese. The patrol leader used excellent judgment in not firing on the two or three Japanese sighted. If he had fired, surprise would have been lost.

c. It was decided to send "K" Company down the north route leading into the ravine. The south approach had a faint path on it. "L" Company was to watch the south approach and feel it out. "I" Company was in reserve. As "K" Company reached the bottom of the ravine they came under fire from the Japanese. They continued across the gulch, however, and started up the hill on the other side, cutting back to the south.

d. "L" Company in the meantime had worked its way down the south approach and made a junction with "K" Company. By dark the first objective had been taken. "A" Company covered the east slopes of the ravine, "I" Company the west.

e. The night of the 10th found the battalion in possession of the Japanese supply routes to the pocket in front of Hill 27.

f. On the 11th "K" Company fought its way north to the grassy top of Hill 43, one platoon of "L" Company covered the trail and ridge to the southwest.

g. Before dark on January 11th the battalion was digging in on Hills 43 and 44, and contact had been made with the 161st Infantry. The 1st Battalion was in possession of the high wooded part of Hill 43.

h. January 12th, 13th and 14th were spent mostly in patrolling to the east and west and clearing enemy bivouacs.

i. In the late afternoon and evening of the 12th Japs in the pocket between Hill 27 and 43 made an attempt to break out between the wooded portion and grassy portion of Hill 43. This effort was repulsed.

j. On the 15th an "L" Company patrol located a large and active Japanese bivouac just east of Hill 43. Captain Jones organized an attack against this bivouac and cleared it out. In this action 60mm, 81mm, and water cooled caliber .30 machine guns were used. The attack was well planned and well executed. The Japanese never knew from what direction the attack was coming until they were hit; surprise was complete.

k. During this entire action no artillery was used. The artillery liaison officers were with the battalion and were more than willing to furnish aid, but this was impossible because of the jungle.

106. BATTALION SUMMARY.---a. The BAR is more suitable than the  
IMG for an attack in the jungle.

b. Movement must be slow and steady, otherwise men become  
fatigued.

c. Jungle warfare is no mystery. It is merely a fight in  
a dense woods.

d. The initiative, courage, and intelligent, aggressive  
action of the junior officers and NCO's is paramount to success.

e. Stay off trails. They are invariably under observa-  
tion of Japanese snipers, and are often used as fire lanes by the  
Japanese.

### SECTION III

#### OPERATIONS OF 1ST BATTALION, JANUARY 9-16, 1943.

Lt. Col. JAMES B. LEER, Commanding.

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107. ORDERS.--On the night of January 8th, the regimental commander issued orders for the attack on January 10th. The 1st Battalion's mission was to be in regimental reserve, to follow the 3rd Battalion and to be prepared to assist the 2nd or 3rd Battalion attack to the west.

108. PRELIMINARY MOVEMENT.--At 0300 January 9th the battalion moved by marching from the last staging area to the line of departure for the reserve battalion of the 35th Infantry, which was about 800 yards southeast of Hill 27 and in rear of the 3rd Battalion, 35th Infantry.

109. OPERATIONS.--a. At 0635 on January 10th the battalion was prepared to move. Company "A" sent out one platoon to patrol to the south and protect the left flank of the 1st and 3rd Battalions. One platoon of Company "C" was sent over the trail to Hill 27 to eliminate snipers which had fired on the artillery liaison section and the battalion ammunition platoon. The forward elements of this battalion advanced to the hill mass just southeast of Hill 43 where one platoon of Company "B", with one platoon of Company "D" attached, moved out to relieve Company "K" at the "Water Hole".

b. On the morning of the 11th the battalion moved out to Hill 43 where the 3rd Battalion had been held up temporarily. During the first halt a leather dispatch case was sent back. The case was found when a party of Japanese were searched that had been killed the night before at the "Water Hole" by the 3rd Battalion. The case contained important maps and important information of the enemy dispositions to the west of Hill 27. The case with papers was sent to the rear CP with orders that they be taken to the Regimental S-2 without delay. These papers proved to be the maps and instructions for the Japanese defensive setup west of Hill 27. The forward CP moved up with the 3rd Battalion CP on the wooded portion of Hill 43.

c. The battalion remained along the trail in rear of the 3rd Battalion until they were able to push on to the Sea Horse. When it was evident that the 3rd Battalion would reach its objective, the regimental commander ordered the 1st Battalion to defend the wooded portion of Hill 43 and be prepared to continue the attack to the southwest on the following morning.

d. Orders were issued at daylight January 12th for the attack. Company "C", with one platoon of Company "D" attached, was to make the attack after passing through the platoon of Company "L" which had remained in contact with the Japanese during the night. Headquarters Company and Company "B", with one platoon of Company "D" attached, were ordered to secure the route of supply toward Hill 27 and maintain the block on the Japanese supply trail at the "Water Hole" east of Hill 43. Japanese resistance was encountered at the jump-off, but Company "C" continued the advance until they were pinned down 1000 yards west of the line of departure by 70mm and machine gun fire. Reconnaissance was initiated to determine the flanks of the enemy position. The dense jungle growth and narrowness of the ridge prevented the immediate continuation of the attack. Artillery fire was requested on the enemy position which was less than 150 yards in advance of our own front lines.

e. During the attack on the 12th a Japanese counterattack had succeeded in blocking the narrow trail leading to the 3rd Battalion on Hill 43. A platoon from Company "B" was ordered at 1730 to re-establish control of this trail which was to be the route of supply. The mission was accomplished just at dark on the 12th. The artillery could not complete registration on January 12th due to the precipitous terrain.

f. On January 13th, the artillery continued registration and it was requested the 81mm mortars, which were under regimental control, and heavy machine guns be moved to Hill 43 to assist in the attack on January 14th.

g. Terrain and weather prevented arrival of the weapons until late on the 14th. However, two attempts were made to knock out the Japanese strong point after a small amount of artillery fire. Both attempts ran into a wall of fire and Company "C" was forced to withdraw to their original positions after advancing to within 30 yards of the strong point.

h. On the 15th, artillery, 81mm mortar and heavy machine gun preparation fires were placed on the enemy held ridge. After the preparation Company "B" with one platoon of Company "D" moved around the right flank to attack the enemy strong point from the rear. The attack was successful. Thirteen Japanese were killed, twelve prisoners were captured along with two 70mm guns, a large bivouac area containing three ammunition dumps, three light machine guns, many artillery instruments and numerous dispatch cases containing maps and other papers. Darkness prevented the continuation of the attack until the following morning.

i. On the 16th, Company "B" with one platoon of Company "D", continued the movement to the west and encountered no resistance. The regimental objective had been passed and the forward elements of the battalion were on the cliff overlooking the Matanikau by 1500. Our exact location, due to density of the jungle, was not determined until the following day.



110. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED.--There should be no movement of friendly troops in jungle warfare at night. Men will shoot at any movement because it is impossible to distinguish friend from enemy in the jungle growth at night. Fire control was unsatisfactory initially, but officers and non-commissioned officers soon taught the men to hold their fire until the enemy exposed himself, rather than fire on jungle noises. At first there was also a tendency to fire a whole machine gun belt but after the first attack this too was well controlled by the junior officers and non-commissioned officers.

## SECTION IV

### OPERATIONS OF THE 2ND BATTALION January 7th to January 15th, 1943

At the Gifu Strong Point, Guadalcanal, S.I.

Lt. Col. STANLEY R. LARSEN, Commanding.

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111. OPERATIONS, JANUARY 7, 1943.--a. On January 7th, the 2nd Battalion, while bivouaced east of Windmill Hill, received orders to move to the northern slopes of Mt. Austen to relieve the 132d Infantry. Secrecy was stressed and the orders for the relief called for Companies "E" and "F" to proceed by way of a back trail seven miles to the front, for Headquarters Company and Companies "G" and "H" to infiltrate directly into the positions held by the 132d Infantry, and the 25th Division Reconnaissance Troop was to join the battalion at the front.

b. The battalion (less Companies "E" and "F") moved into positions with the 132d Infantry by dark on the 8th without difficulty. The battalion commander and all company commanders had been reconnoitering their sectors and were waiting to guide their units into position when they arrived. Companies "E" and "F", under the battalion executive, left the bivouac at 0200 of the 8th, following the 3rd Battalion over the back route to Hill 27. The guide provided had never been over the route nor had anyone in either the 2nd or 3rd Battalions. The trail was muddy and the weather was extremely hot. Because of frequent halts, they were still about two miles east of Mt. Austen at 1400. From that point, a reconnaissance group of seven proceeded along three assault phone wires to reconnoiter for Hill 27, while the battalions remained where they were. After two hours, the reconnaissance group reached Hill 27 and immediately sent a man back to guide Companies "E" and "F" to Hill 27. The two companies had all reached the "Water Hole" and Class "C" rations had been issued them just prior to darkness. They were bivouaced for the night of the 8th on the southeast slope of Hill 27. It rained all night.

c. The relief of the 132d Infantry was completed by the afternoon of the 9th. The maps and information of the enemy along our front, given us by the unit we had relieved, were inaccurate and incomplete. The 2nd Battalion occupied the front previously held by three battalions; disposed with Company "E" and the Reconnaissance Troop on Hill 27, Company "F" (1st Platoon, Company "H" attached) on their right, Company "G" (2nd Platoon, Company "H" attached) on Hill 31. Company "H" (less 1st and 2nd Platoons) was set up to fire from Hill 29, and Headquarters Company was being used for carrying ammuni-

tion and supplies from the end of the jeep road to the companies on the line. The battalion occupied approximately 2000 yards of front with no reserve. Japanese sniping and random firing and return firing was continuous throughout the day of the 9th. Intelligence as to the enemy in the pocket between Hill 27 and Hill 31 estimated the strength at not over 100 Japs with two known machine guns. At 1400 the men defending the peak of Hill 27 were searching the wooded ridge to the north with machine gun fire with good results when the first casualty of the battalion was sniped from the rear. Immediately following that, some very accurate Japanese mortar fire caused two additional casualties on the Hill. When this baptism was over, practically every man on Hill 27 anxiously moved into positions of fire and opened up at the terrain to their front. A sergeant of Company "E" crawled close enough and killed the Jap with the mortar that had caused the casualties. At 1600 there was still a large gap between Company "E" and Company "F". A patrol of 40 men was organized for the purpose of moving west from the supply trail, driving the enemy out, and occupying a straight line from Hill 27 to the left flank of Company "F". The patrol became split by a ridge and the left part met strong machine gun fire and could not advance. Ten men on the right of the patrol advanced two hundred yards to the line desired, suffering one casualty and killing two surprised Japs. When it was determined that contact with Company "F" and with the remainder of the patrol was lost, this group withdrew after waiting an hour. Then the entire patrol withdrew and formed listening posts in rear of the gap for the night. There was no other action in the battalion on the 9th. Enemy estimated in the pocket was over 100 men with about ten machine guns.

112. OPERATIONS, JANUARY 10-12, 1943.---a. The mission for January 10th was to determine the enemy dispositions and to advance the line if possible, to better protect the supply trail to Hill 27. Two combat patrols were sent straight to their front by each of the three line companies. Artillery fired well out in the pocket and all of the mortars fired prior to the advance of the patrols. All patrols were stopped as soon as they began their advance. One patrol from Company "F", while maneuvering to knock out two pill boxes, sustained seven casualties and was forced to withdraw. A patrol from Company "E" had encountered a machine gun and had knocked it out, but were forced back by hand grenades thrown from trees, inflicting six casualties. The 2nd Battalion intelligence indicated 400 Japanese in the pocket with about 20 machine guns. Tanks were requested for use against the well built Jap pill boxes but were not available.

b. January 11th and 12th the 2nd Battalion continued to feel out the enemy by extensive patrol action to the front and to the rear. Sporadic fire continued from behind the lines by Japanese who had infiltrated during the nights. 2nd Battalion casualties to date totaled 57 killed or wounded against a verified 75 Japs killed. The 3rd and 1st Battalions had completed the encirclement of the pocket and the supply for the Japanese in the pocket had been cut off entirely.

c. January 13th an "F" Company patrol advanced into the middle of three pill boxes before the Japanese opened up. The platoon suffered twelve casualties and had one missing. They withdrew their casualties and all of the battalion mortars laid a barrage on the area. One 81mm shell fell short into the mortar section of Company "G" inflicting seven casualties. A pill box was knocked out just ten yards from an "F" Company position, killing twelve Japs in it.

113. OPERATIONS, JANUARY 14, 1943.--January 14th intensive patrolling to the front was continued by all companies. Malaria accounted for more each day and the battalion was then at about 75% strength. Infiltration through the lines had ceased and the sniping was not as active as it had been the previous day. The artillery and 81mm mortars had fired intermittently into the pocket every night since the 8th. It and the hand grenades at night did not allow the enemy much rest. Battle noises and "C" rations of 7 days were beginning to be felt. Anti-tank Company was attached to the 2nd Battalion and was put into the line between Companies "F" and "G".

114. OPERATIONS, JANUARY 15, 1943.--January 15th the 2nd Battalion began an attack at 0700 after a fifteen minute mortar concentration of all mortars. The mission was to clean the Japanese out of the pocket and to drive west to meet the 3rd Battalion on Hill 43. The plan employed Company "G" on the right, Anti-tank Company in the center, and Company "F" on the left in assault, to converge after pushing approximately 500 yards to their respective fronts, while Company "E" remained in reserve on the west slope of Hill 27 to be used for enveloping the strongest resistance that would be met. Small groups were able to advance, but most of the attack was stopped immediately, and a reluctance to continue pushing without physical contact with adjacent units halted the entire attack with an average advance of only fifty yards. Anti-tank Company had run into a swarm of pill boxes that had stopped them completely just a few yards from their original positions, causing 5 killed, 10 wounded and 20 missing out of their two assault platoons. The 3rd Platoon of Company "F" had sustained five dead and seven wounded and were stopped. Company "G" had advanced 100 yards but were receiving heavy fire. Twelve men of Company "H" Mortar Platoon were thrown in to close the gap between Anti-tank Company and Company "G", two were killed and one wounded and they withdrew from the fire. The attack was resumed at 1400 but failed to gain at any point. The Pioneer Platoon of Headquarters Company was put in to fill the gap between the two companies. Company "E" had attempted to take the pressure off the 3rd Platoon of Company "F" by enveloping the resistance, but conflicting orders nullified their support. At 1700 it was obvious that the attack had bogged down and could not succeed that day, nor could the ground gained be held. Aid men and wounded on stretchers were deliberately riddled during evacuation. Upon order, the companies withdrew to their original lines badly shaken. This days action convinced everyone that the pocket was well organized in a strong delaying position that could not

be by-passed. The principal weapons used in this close jungle fighting were the shotgun, hand and rifle grenades and flame throwers supplementing the automatic rifle and the rifle. To reduce the stubborn resistance of well dug in and highly coordinated defensive positions by personnel alone, without supporting arms such as tanks or gas, involved highly costly operations.

## SECTION V

### SUMMARY OF ACTIONS AT GIFU STRONG POINT

#### 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry

16th - 26th January, 1943

Colonel R. B. MCCLURE, 35th Infantry, Commanding.

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115. ENEMY SITUATION.--a. On January 16th, the day following the repulsed attack of the 2nd Battalion on the Gifu Strong Point, time was taken to make another estimate of the situation based on the previous day's actions and on the information gained from them.

b. It was definitely established that the Japanese had a strong ring of mutually supporting, well camouflaged pill boxes, covering approximately three-fifths of the circumference of the Gifu defense ring. The remainder was covered by individual, small combat groups, made up of sniper positions, separate pill boxes, and light machine guns in shallow fox holes.

c. It was also established that the enemy had no intentions of trying to escape but intended to hold his ground to the bitter end. The mistaken assumption that they would not hold had caused the failure of the previous day's attack.

116. OPERATIONS.--In conjunction with plans and orders from the regimental commander it was decided to tighten the pressure gradually around the entire strong point, and to cut off their line of communications more nearly completely by extending a closely knit line between Hills 27 and 42. With a few unexpected interruptions the regimental plan was carried out as follows:

a. On the 16th, Company "E" was ordered to move from their original line to a bivouac on Hill 30 and to spend the night there, moving the following morning to a draw by Hill 42.

b. On the afternoon of the 16th, a loudspeaker was set up in the Company "G" front line and an order was broadcast to the enemy demanding they surrender or suffer the consequences. This was done with the hope of avoiding further bloodshed and was attempted as a result of the surrender of two Japanese earlier in the afternoon. The result was negative.

c. The following morning, the 17th, a second attempt was made by Corps Headquarters to induce the enemy by loudspeaker to surrender. This delayed several hours the plan to have the artillery lay down a most powerful concentration in the entire pocket between Hills 27 and 43.

d. At 1130 the entire 2nd Battalion line, less the troops on Hill 27, moved 300 yards to the rear. After a period of fire adjustment, four battalions of 105's and one of 155's opened up a continuous bombardment of the entire area, lasting two and a half hours and ceasing at 1630. All of the 2nd Battalion mortars layed down barrages on areas which could not be covered by the artillery. It was a magnificent display of highly accurate firing, controlled by observers on Hill 27, the battalion CP, Hills 29, 31 and 43. The exact results were not known until after the strong point had fallen, but the few prisoners taken during the next ten days were practically all shell shocked.

e. Promptly at 1630 the line was occupied, and throughout the night intermittent mortar fire was placed in the ring.

f. Early on the 18th the move to tighten the noose began.

g. Company "I" of the 182nd Infantry was ordered to secure the line from Hill 42 south to a little knoll, and from there to make contact with a reinforced platoon of Company "G" which extended from Hill 27 to the eastern edge of the gulch beside the knoll (see appendix). At the same time Company "E", which had bivouaced the night before in the vicinity of Hill 42, followed Company "I" about 300 yards and then cut left, below and around Hill 31 to strike the Japanese from the rear.

h. By 1700 Company "I" had made contact with Lt. Barry's "G" Company platoon and Company "E" had closed in sufficiently, and with complete surprise, knocked out three Japanese pill boxes before dark, killing at least seven of the enemy's men before they were discovered by the enemy, and finally pinned down.

i. At dusk Lt. Barry climbed to the crest of a slight rise in the terrain and discovered two pill boxes a short distance ahead of him and to the right of Company "E". By directing the fire himself the mortars from Company "G" knocked out one of them.

j. During the morning, an "F" Company patrol located two enemy pill boxes across the gulch from the center of their line. A 37mm gun and an 81mm mortar were sent over rough terrain to their sector and placed with difficulty, to aid in the reduction of these and other suspected positions. The 37mm gun knocked out one of the boxes with a direct hit.

k. The left of the Company "F" line moved forward across the gulch about 100 yards and straightened, as well as shortened, their line.

1. Company "E" had closed in on, and had pierced, the outer ring of pill boxes. A second line of more closely knit boxes was discovered just inside the first row. Company "G", on "E's" left, reported fourteen pill boxes on their front.

m. The following day, January 20, was spent in feeling for weak spots in the line. A Company "F" patrol succeeded in penetrating 150 yards into the line. A heavy rain which lasted all day hampered any attempt to exploit any small successes. A small "G" Company patrol succeeded in crawling up to three pill boxes during the heaviest part of the rain and destroyed them with hand grenades, killing a total of four men who tried to escape.

n. During the night of January 20-21, attempts by small groups of the enemy were made to break through our lines in five places. The Japanese lost a total of eleven men in these attempts.

117. TANK ACTION.--a. On January 21st permission was finally granted to use a tank against the pill boxes. Many requests had been made for its use, but they had been refused for more urgent reasons.

b. Plans were made and orders issued for its use on the following day. All mortars and machine guns would fire sporadically while the tank carried out its mission, partly to deaden the sound of the tank's engine, and partly to keep the Japanese guessing.

c. At 1040, January 22nd, Captain Teddy Deese led the tank into the line on Company "G's" left flank with a wedge of fifteen men and one officer following in rear, as protection against enemy action. This first penetration resulted in knocking out three boxes. The tank had turned left and had worked its way in front of the Headquarters Company line. At 1500 Captain Deese again entered the Japanese lines, turned right, and succeeded in disposing of five more boxes. One of these received four 37mm H.E. shots at close range before it crumbled.

d. This action was directed at the center of the Japanese lines. It breached a gap about 200 yards long which allowed our line to move forward and occupied new positions beyond the pill boxes. It formed a small but strong salient.

e. Company "E", having been tightly pinned down for two days, sent a platoon to the right in an attempt to flank the positions which were holding them down. Darkness prevented the completion of this task.

118. MAIN ENEMY COUNTERATTACK.--a. The night of January 22-23 proved finally to be the turning point in the reduction of the Gifu Strong Point. At about 0230 approximately one hundred Japanese rushed the line in the vicinity of the boundary line between Company "F" and the Anti-tank Company. Armed with hand grenades, pistols, and rifles, they shouted and charged in true suicidal fashion. The skirmish lasted about 20 minutes, but none of our men left his hole until dawn.



Inspection of the lines revealed a total of eighty-five Japanese killed and three prisoners. Of these there were two majors, eight captains and fifteen lieutenants. It was conclusive evidence that their resistance had broken. However, when all the units attempted to move forward, the remaining pill boxes were still occupied. Evidently one man had been left behind in each position.

b. At 1500 another patrol was sent out from Company "G" which rolled up between 15 and 20 boxes and killed as many enemy. At the same time Company "E" advanced all along their front seizing in the neighborhood of 15 pill boxes. By darkness the Gifu area had been reduced to negative resistance, and the following day clean-up patrols scoured the entire sector for all remaining resistance.

c. The battalion remained in position until January 26th, when it turned over its responsibility to Company "I" of the 182nd Infantry.

d. Not much has been mentioned about what occurred on Hill 27 and the line connecting it and Hill 42. Nightly there were attempts by groups of two, three and four men, to break through, either to be killed or turned back. These groups shared in the clean up during the last two days.

119. ACTION OF RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON.--a. Attached to the 2nd Battalion during the action in this sector were the Division Reconnaissance Squadron and the Regimental Anti-tank Company. The Reconnaissance Squadron was assigned the defense of Hill 27 in conjunction with detachments from Companies "E" and "H". Their action on Hill 27 and their cooperation with the 2nd Battalion throughout the entire action was commendable.

b. A regimental forward OP was maintained on Hill 49 throughout the reduction of the pocket, and its accurate and frequent reports helped materially in keeping various headquarters excellently informed at all times.

120. SUMMARY AND LESSONS LEARNED.--a. With all due respect to the regiment which the 2nd Battalion relieved, their information of the size and positions of the enemy were meager and their maps of the area inaccurate. This should teach us not always to trust implicitly all information from other units. At least it should be verified before any decisions, or actions based on it, are incorporated in orders.

b. Patrols must be sent out for a definite purpose, such as to locate and to destroy an enemy position or to investigate certain terrain features. Haphazard patrols, sent out piece-meal and with no particular mission, may end in disaster, useless loss of life, and possible loss in morale.

c. Outside interference with the already organized plans and schedule for a mission should be kept to a minimum. I cite, as an example, the loudspeaker attempts to coax the Japanese into surrendering. On the 16th the same promises were made from Hill 31 to the Gifu area as had previously been broadcast from Hill 44. On January 17th artillery concentrations were delayed at least five hours by the repetition of the broadcast of the day before. By the time the artillery barrage lifted and the men had returned to their original line, there was little or no time to investigate and capitalize on any temporary damage done to the enemy. It gave the enemy time to clear the trails during the night and to reoccupy positions which were only partly destroyed.

d. Orders were issued not to shoot any Jap who desired to surrender prior to 1800. Previously, on the first broadcast, they were given until the following morning to surrender, with the warning that if they didn't they would be blasted to bits. The following morning, bright and early, they were given another chance until noon. Then again, between 1630 and 1800, we were ordered to let them come in.

e. This had a very bad effect on our own men. It is believed, in the first place, that the experiment, if experiment it was, of asking the enemy to give up should not be tried again, and that we should live up to our threats to the letter, carrying them home with all the more force and determination.

f. There was a continual waste of ammunition, day and night. Firing at targets whose direction even, cannot be determined much less seen, results only in giving one's own position away and makes the man next to him unnecessarily apprehensive.

g. Of some 5000 hand grenades thrown at night in this section the only established success they had was the Company "F" action when 85 Japanese were killed, and a few individual well placed shots from and around Hill 27.

h. Despite repeated instructions, advice, and warnings, men insisted on carrying too much unnecessary equipment to the front. It resulted in much of it being lost or thrown away. However, everyone who participated in the jungle actions has learned this lesson and it will not re-occur in future movements into the "bush".

i. Maximum use should be made of every possible or logical weapon in order to accomplish a mission. Had one tank been made available when it was first requested on January 12th, it is believed that the Japanese resistance would have been broken then, instead of 14 days later.

j. Observations made during the combat period include a couple worth mentioning. The crack of the caliber .25 rifle is very deceiving. It is impossible in heavy undergrowth to tell where it originates. On many occasions men were found firing into the woods at what apparently was a sniper firing at them. Closer analysis however, often showed that the rifle was not only two or three hundred yards away, but was firing in the opposite direction. Men who had been at the front two weeks were still fooled by the deceptive crack of this rifle. The same is true of the caliber .25 automatic weapons.

k. Men should be kept as fresh as possible. Over exertion in this climate comes suddenly and without warning. Halts during marches should be frequent and short; time and distance are thereby gained in the long run.

l. The 81mm heavy shell with a delayed fuze proved to be the most effective mortar shell used in the entire action. Its destructive effect was as great as the 105mm shell, its accuracy cannot be surpassed, its delayed action gives it the punch where it belongs, and it has a concussion effect which adds to the damage. Unfortunately, this ammunition is no longer being made, but it is believed that this shell definitely should be brought back for this type of warfare.

m. The problems of administering first-aid and of evacuating the wounded were not as serious as in the other sectors. The lines were more or less stationary, routine systems were established to handle casualties, and the distances to the collecting stations were not especially long.

n. The Field Artillery made a remarkable record in this area. Their cooperation, accurate relaying of requests and prompt fulfillment of them has given every man in the battalion complete confidence in the reliability and accuracy of all of their weapons.

o. The actions and problems in the Gifu Strong Point were different from all other actions encountered by the 35th Infantry. Although the methods of reducing this area might be considerably different were it to be done over again, nevertheless the mission was accomplished with a toll of ten Japanese to our one, which speaks well for the American Soldier.

121. ENEMY CASUALTIES AND CAPTURED EQUIPMENT.---Total enemy killed were 431.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Total enemy heavy machine guns captured  | 9   |
| Total enemy medium machine guns captured | 2   |
| Total enemy light machine guns captured  | 29  |
| Total enemy mortars captured             | 12  |
| Total enemy rifles captured              | 200 |
| Total enemy swords captured              | 38  |
| Total enemy pistols captured             | 38  |

Our losses were a total of 64 killed and 42 wounded.

## SECTION VI

ARTILLERY SUPPORT, JANUARY 5-13, 1943

Lt. Col. WILLIAM H. ALLEN, Jr., 64th F.A. Commanding

|                               | Paragraph |
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122. ORDERS.--On January 5 instructions were issued to reconnoiter, select and occupy positions in the vicinity of Hill 34. The mission assigned was first, direct support of the 35th Infantry, and second, general support of the 25th Division. Positions were selected, and occupation and survey were completed by January 8th.

123. REGISTRATION.--a. On January 8th and 9th extensive registration was carried out to determine deflection and range corrections for various surveyed check points in the zone of the Division. Registration proved that the survey, which was plotted on a 1/20,000 grid sheet, was precise. The grid sheet survey was necessitated by the fact that no fire control maps were available, and the uncontrolled mosaic furnished was too inaccurate for firing. No wide angle or single vertical photographs, which would have been extremely helpful, were furnished. All that was possible was to locate certain prominent terrain features by triangulation. These features, identified on the ground by forward observers, served as reference points in relation to which forward observers could call for fire. For instance: "check point Able is 300 right 400 short, machine guns, will adjust."

b. Fortunately, the high ground in the vicinity of Mt. Austen afforded exceptionally good observation so that observed fire was always possible. Without maps or mosaics, accurate unobserved fire was impossible.

124. SELECTION OF POSITIONS.--a. The necessity of covering a wide sector, being able to reach far into the enemy territory without displacement, and of firing at ranges as short as 1800 yards necessitated placing two batteries in very exposed positions on the crests of knife-edged ridges bare of cover. Fortunately the enemy's lack of artillery and aviation made these positions tenable.

b. Other factors which dictated this choice of positions were the inaccessibility of defiladed positions, the concentration of artillery within a small area, and the lack of good roads for hauling ammunition. Two days of fire, 5400 rounds, weighing 135 tons, were dumped at the positions by January 8th. Considering the inadequacy of transportation this was no mean accomplishment. Ammunition was hauled at night in the rain under blackout over the Wright Road without an accident.

125. LIAISON AND OBSERVATION.--a. Forward observers and liaison officers were sent out prior to January 10th. The assignment was as follows: one liaison officer and parties to each of the 3 battalions of the 35th Infantry, one forward observer with the battalions making the encirclement, one forward observer on Hill 27, one observer on Hill 31, and one observer on OP 15. This arrangement resulted in securing observation in the Hill 27 - 43 pocket from four sides.

b. Several unusual problems were encountered in securing liaison and observation. Since photos were not available, and no duplicating apparatus as authorized by T/BA was furnished, many overlays had to be laboriously traced by hand for the liaison parties and observers. (At least ten gridded photos should be available per battalion for use as indicated.)

c. Maintenance of communications forward was extremely difficult. Wire lines were almost impossible to maintain over the jungle trails. It was almost impossible for men to carry enough wire for the long lines, and when laid, lines were constantly broken by heavy traffic and trail building. The only practicable means of communication with the 1st and 3rd battalions was by 284 radio. This set, though reliable, is a man killing load. The 194, ultra high frequency set rarely worked.

d. The necessity for the carrying of heavy radios, wire, and rations and of extra men for protection of line guards required that each forward party consist of at least twelve men. The fatigue incidents to their duties and the high rate of sickness necessitated constant reliefs. A large proportion of the personnel of the battalion, therefore must be trained as forward observers and communications men. The strain on radio operators was especially heavy.

126. FIRING MISSIONS.--The artillery action commenced on January 10th with the firing of a general preparation ordered by the Division Artillery. This fire was not laid down in the zone-of-action of the 35th Infantry. Not much fire was delivered in the 35th Infantry sector during the phase 10 - 13 January, as the enemy had not been sufficiently developed. Considerable fire was delivered in support of the 27th Infantry attack and on counterbattery and harrassing missions in the Kokumbona area.

127. SUMMARY.--a. Gridded photos should be made available to artillery battalions.

b. A light, reliable radio set of the 511 type is needed in lieu of the SCR-284.

c. 511 sets should be issued on the same basis as the 194.

## SECTION VII

### ARTILLERY SUPPORT, JANUARY 14-17, 1943

Lt. Col. WILLIAM H. ALLEN, Jr., 64TH F.A. Commanding

|                                 | Paragraph |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Problems of Operations .....    | 128       |
| Operations - January 16th ..... | 129       |
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| Lessons Learned .....           | 131       |

128. PROBLEMS OF OPERATION.--a. Operations of the 64th Field Artillery Battalion in support of the 35th Infantry during the period 14 - 27 January 1943, in the battle for Guadalcanal, comprised principally fires in support of the 2nd Battalion, which was reducing the Hill 27 - Hill 31 - Hill 43 pocket, and fires in support of the 1st Battalion, which was pushing west from Hill 43. During this period other fires were delivered in general support of the Division, but they will not be discussed in this paper.

b. Support of the 1st Battalion presented a formidable problem. Communication had necessarily to be by radio, which is not nearly as satisfactory a medium, by reason of lack of secrecy, as wire. Thick jungle so reduced observation that, in order to adjust fire, observers had to crawl up almost within the enemy lines and bring down artillery fire within 100 yards of their own position. On several occasions friendly troops had to be withdrawn, leaving the artillery observers ahead of their own front lines and subjected to enemy sniper, mortar, and artillery fire, not to mention the danger from their own artillery. A real danger to the observers was that because of the denseness of the jungle and the lack of good maps, it was impossible to locate themselves or our front lines accurately. This was a nerve-racking problem for the fire-direction center. On several occasions forward observers and liaison officers called for marking of check points by the use of smoke in order to orient themselves and the infantry.

c. The Japanese made clever use of this difficulty in orienting ourselves. Almost invariably as soon as our artillery opened fire close to our troops the Japanese opened up with mortar and cannon fire on our front lines. The result invariably was anguished calls to the FDC to cease firing. Hours and even days of delay were caused by this trick. The final result of this confusion was that the artillery battalion commander directed that all adjustments must be started with only one piece, and that each battery must be adjusted individually on the target before a battalion concentration could be fired. The resulting loss of surprise and effectiveness is obvious. However, in order to retain the confidence of the infantry such procedure was found to be necessary.

d. It should be pointed out that whenever fire is called for within 300 yards of friendly troops some casualties therefrom are possible. This is not the result of errors in firing, but is caused by dispersion and the fact that the radius of fragmentation from the burst of a 105mm HE shell is 300 yards.

e. Another difficult problem was that of dead space. The Japanese were usually found in deep ravines, into which the placing of fire was sometimes impossible without a few rounds hitting the trees on the ridge intervening between the enemy and our troops. The discussion of the firing in the Hill 27 - Hill 31 pocket will illustrate this clearly.

f. In spite of these handicaps there is no question that the 553 rounds of HE fired by the forward observer with the 1st Battalion on the morning of January 15th aided that battalion materially in overcoming resistance west of Hill 43. An interesting incident during this action was the capture of a Japanese 77mm field piece 75 yards distant from the forward observer's observation post; the gun was sited to fire down a lane through the jungle enfilading their position.

129. OPERATIONS - JANUARY 16TH.--a. Perhaps the most interesting action of the campaign from the artillery standpoint was the heavy concentration fired into the bowl bounded by Hills 27, 31, 42, and 43, occupied by the OKA unit.

b. On 16 January the commanding officer, 35th Infantry requested a heavy concentration by all available artillery in the pocket, which was held by 500 Japs well dug into pillboxes and under the roots of trees in dense jungle. Interlocking bands of machine gun fire and the protection of machine guns by snipers made the reduction of this position a formidable operation. The jungle was so thick that the opposing forces were in very close contact.

c. At the conference, the Commanding Officer, 35th Infantry showed the artillery battalion commander a large scale map on which the known and suspected enemy defenses were indicated. A study of the map and terrain showed that in order to reach into the deep ravines it was necessary to clear all friendly troops from Hill 31, inasmuch as the trajectories of all pieces firing would pass over the crest of the hill. Calculation of the angles of fall showed that fire could not be placed into the ravines unless no safety factor was allowed for clearing Hill 31. On account of the shortness of its range the 64th F.A. Bn. was unable to fire at elevations greater than 800 mils. The 155mm howitzers can not fire at angles of elevation greater than 800 mils, and, unfortunately were forced to use a powder charge which gives an angle of fall of approximately 30 degrees. It is regretted that only one piece from the 8th F.A. Bn. was available for this mission, as the battalion was ideally located for the use of high angle fire. The one piece used placed very effective plunging fire in the area.

d. Immediately following the conference with the Commanding Officer, 35th Infantry, the Commanding Officer, 64th F. A. Bn. requested that supporting fire from other artillery be placed at his disposal. The 25th Division Artillery assigned the 89th F. A. Bn. (105mm), one gun from the 8th F. A. Bn. (105mm), the 90th F. A. Bn. (155mm), and the 221st F. A. Bn. (105mm) to the mission. The S-3 of the 64th F. A. Bn. went forward to arrange the scheme of observation. The 35th Infantry was to station infantry officers with the artillery observers.

130. OPERATIONS - JANUARY 17TH.--a. On 17 January observers were placed on Hills 31, 27, 42, and 43 as shown in figure 1. The liaison officers were accompanied by infantry officers, who pointed out the targets and the location of our infantry. Prior to 1200, the 2nd Battalion withdrew 300 yards from the east perimeter of the pocket and from Hill 31. In spite of instructions to clear Hill 31, however, several OP parties from the artillery remained on the hill to observe the fire. Unfortunately this zeal on the part of the observers resulted in an OP being demolished by a direct hit from a 155mm shell. Fortunately the OP party had just evacuated the post.

b. At 1200 adjustment of fire was commenced. Owing to the necessity for covering the entire area, approximately 1,000 yards square, each piece was adjusted on its target individually. The adjustment was conducted by forward-observer methods, a report being received from each observer before corrections were made.

c. The system of fire direction was somewhat unusual. Reports from observers came directly to the 64th F. A. Bn. FDC via wire and radio. The radio was operated by remote controls directly from FDC. The 8th, 89th, and 90th F. A. Bns. FDC's were connected by direct wire to the 64th F. A. Bn. FDC. Sensings from observers were interpreted and transmitted to the FDC's of the supporting battalions. The 64th F. A. Bn. FDC, of course, directed the fire of its batteries. Fire of the 221st F. A. Bn. of the Americal Division was directed through the 25th Division Artillery FDC, where a liaison officer of the 221st F. A. Bn. was stationed. Although this means of fire direction was somewhat unorthodox it is believed it worked more satisfactorily than would have Division Artillery control, on account of the 64th F. A. Bn. Commander's more intimate knowledge of the situation. The chief disadvantage was that a considerable overload was placed on the 64th F. A. Bn. FDC personnel.

d. Adjustment was completed by 1430. The adjustment consumed so much time because of the number of pieces, 49 had to be adjusted individually, and because of frequent calls to cease firing, principally from the troops on Hill 42. The reverberation of the explosions in the bowl of hills made it appear that the fire was closer to friendly troops than it actually was. Possibly some fragments reached Hill 42, but no rounds actually landed within our front lines. The troops on Hill 42 were not from the 25th Division.



e. The observer on Hill 43 was charged with insuring that no fire fell south of the line Hill 27 - Hill 43, and that none fell north of the line Hill 31 - Hill 42. The observers on the line Hill 31 - Hill 27 insured that no fire fell east of that line.

f. From 1430 until 1600 fire for effect from all guns was placed in the target area. Approximately 1700 rounds of 155mm and 105mm were fired. Observers reported that the concussion from the fire was so terrific that the troops along the eastern side of the pocket were dazed for some time after the cessation of fire.

g. After 1600 the original front lines were reoccupied without opposition. It is unfortunate that due to the difficulty of the terrain and the lateness of the hour it was impossible to assault the enemy position immediately subsequent to the lifting of the concentration. Had such action been possible it is believed that lesser opposition would have been met than was encountered the next day. The enemy's morale must have been shaken, temporarily at least, by the shelling.

h. Had the 35th Infantry Cannon Company been available it could have done extremely effective work from the crest of the Hill 42 ridge. Direct fire could have searched the deep ravines from this position. It is believed that the artillery battalion commander missed a bet in not emplacing several of his guns on this ridge for direct fire.

i. For several days subsequent to the 17th, intermittent concentrations and harassing fires were placed in the pocket until mopping up was completed on January 25th.

j. Concurrently with the fires in support of the 35th Infantry various counterbattery and general support missions were executed in the 27th and 161st Infantry sectors until the advance of these units carried them beyond the 12000 yard range of the battalions' howitzers. The 64th F. A. Bn. took over their direct support missions while the 8th and 89th F. A. Bns were displacing to forward positions. It was found that in these subsequent phases of the action adjustments on check points by artillery aerial observers was very useful. It is believed that the battalion would be greatly helped were they to have the airplanes assigned to them by the new T/BA.

k. From January 8th to January 25th the 64th F. A. Bn. fired approximately 8000 rounds.

131. LESSONS LEARNED.--a. We learned some valuable lessons from the operations. Communications are so vital and wire communications are so difficult to maintain that lighter but powerful radio sets are badly needed. A large supply of batteries should be available.

b. Persons requesting fire, and this applies especially to our own liaison officers and observers, must give us complete information on the nature of the target, the type and quantity of fire desired, and, especially, and most important, warning of any likelihood of danger to our own troops. For instance, battalion concentrations should not be called for closer than 400 yards from our troops. Certain errors are inherent in the method of firing other batteries in the battalion based on the adjustment of a single battery.

c. Where at all possible, infantry mortars and cannon should execute missions where fire is closer to our own troops than 350 yards. If fire is called for from field artillery or targets closer than 350 yards the infantry must be prepared to accept some casualties therefrom. That so few were sustained in the operations discussed is a tribute to the energy, courage, and technical ability of the liaison officers and forward observers, to the painstaking care and good judgment of the S-3's, the accuracy of the survey by the S-2's, and to the accuracy of the FDC computers and of the firing batteries.

d. Where possible to employ it, direct cannon fire is of the greatest value. Direct cannon fire in close support of the infantry is not normally a function of the field artillery but is the *raison d'être* of the infantry cannon companies.

e. Accurate maps and/or suitable photographs in sufficient quantities will make our problems immeasurably simpler. Such did not exist in this action. Had stereo pairs been available to artillery battalions the opportunity to secure better vertical control would have made our initial fire much more accurate. Artillery Battalions are equipped with stereoscopes and need stereo pairs as much or more than the infantry.

f. Aerial observation is needed. Fortunately in this situation the hills gave much better observation than one can normally expect.

g. It was found that in this close jungle fighting it is imperative for an infantry officer to be with the forward observer in order to point out the enemy and our own troops. In most instances the infantry battalion commanders themselves assisted the artillery officers in directing fire.

h. Another lesson learned was that smoke shell is a necessity in locating, for the observer, the first few rounds of the adjustment and for pointing out check points on the ground. Time shell was not found to be as satisfactory as smoke for this purpose on account of the erratic action of the fuzes and because the artillery has no fuze setters.

i. Other lessons are that in order to penetrate the dense jungle and search the ravines, delay fuze, the heaviest possible projectile, and the steepest possible angle of fall are necessary. It is believed that 155mm shells are much more effective than 105mm howitzers and that 75mm shells are of doubtful utility. However, the possibility of using high angle fire with the 105mm howitzer (not possible with the 155mm howitzer) somewhat counterbalances the greater effectiveness of the heavier projectile.

j. Last, and most important of all, the excellent results achieved would have been impossible without the teamwork developed in the many months of close association between the members of the the 35th Combat Team. The close cooperation and unstinting assistance of Colonel McClure, his staff, and the battalion and company commanders made possible the accomplishment of our mission.

## SECTION VIII

### SUPPLY AND EVACUATION

Major GEORGE R. HARRISON, Jr., Supply Officer.

|                          | Paragraphs |
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| Conclusions .....        | 134        |

132. PRIOR PLANNING.--a. At the Division Commander's conference on January 3, 1943 the warning order for the Division move was issued to the Regimental Commanders. The following day, January 4th, the Regimental Commander instigated a reconnaissance by regimental staff officers in the 132nd Infantry area. The 35th S-4 contacted the S-4 of the 132nd Infantry who gave some very valuable information relative to the conduct of the supply system in the 132nd Infantry, among this information the necessity for establishing a native camp. The assistant S-4, 35th, was detailed to command the native camp and supervise the carrying parties. All orders to the natives were given through their "No. 1" black boy or "Chief." He in turn dealt with the "No. 2" boys or lesser chiefs. The entire organization was of a semi-military nature, with non-commissioned officers assisting the officer in charge of small groups organized under the "No. 2" boys. The Cannon Company personnel were used to guard the native caravans as they moved along the jungle trails carrying ammunition and rations.

b. Prior to January 8th, ration and ammunition dumps were established along Wright Road, one about a mile and one-half south of the beach; one on Windmill Hill; and another at the end of the Jeep Road near the front of the 132nd Infantry lines.

133. PROBLEMS OF SUPPLY.--a. On January 8th the 132nd Infantry was relieved by the 2nd Battalion of the 35th Infantry. Initially, all of the native carriers (approximately 200) were used to carry rations and ammunition to the 2nd Battalion. However, later the same day it became necessary to divide the natives into two groups and send one group along the trail cut by the 3rd Battalion on the wide envelopment around the Japanese right flank. On the morning of the 9th of January, the 1st Battalion moved out behind the 3rd Battalion and it became evident that all of the natives would have to be employed to service these two battalions. The 2nd Battalion Commander was contacted and informed that it would be necessary for him to use his personnel to service his battalion from the forward ration and ammunition dump at the end of the Jeep Road. Approximately 20% of the battalion personnel was diverted for supply reasons.

b. On January 11th it became apparent that the 3rd and 1st Battalions were rapidly out-distancing their route of supply. The native carriers could not go into the brush and come back out again in one day. It therefore became necessary to establish a supply dump

on the Matanikau River and service these two battalions up hill mass 44-43. Since it would take at least a day to move the native camp it was recommended to G-4 that the Air Corps be contacted and rations be dropped on hill mass 44-43 on January 12<sup>th</sup>. These arrangements were completed, and on January 13<sup>th</sup> a B-17 dropped ammunition and rations to the 1st and 3rd Battalions. Much of the ammunition and rations were ruined in this operation. However, sufficient rations were dropped to sustain the 1st and 3rd Battalions until the new supply route opened on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January.

c. A forward ration dump was established on the Matanikau River at the foot of Hill 50. The native camp was established on the Matanikau near the 27th Infantry C.P. Rations and ammunition were moved up the Matanikau by boat to the ration dump at the base of Hill 50. Each morning the native carriers would move on foot up the Matanikau, pick up the rations and ammunition at the forward ration dump and carry these supplies up Hills 44 and 43 to the 1st and 3rd Battalions. Two trips a day were made up this hill mass. Each evening battalion S-4's of the 1st and 3rd Battalions were contacted by telephone to find out their needs for the following day. This information was telephoned to G-4. G-4, in turn, would deliver these supplies up the Matanikau by boat and the native carriers would complete the delivery of the supplies up the hill mass. This system of supply with a few modifications continued throughout the remainder of the campaign.

134. CONCLUSIONS.--a. The battalion S-4's on the march must continually reconnoiter for waterholes. Men drink a great deal of water in jungle combat.

b. Regimental and battalion supply officers must continually plan alternates routes of supply. There is no assurance that a present route of supply may not be cut by the enemy. This situation must be kept in mind and alternate routes established in the event of a change in the tactical situation.

c. All articles of equipment must be camouflaged to blend with the surrounding terrain. This has always been S.O.P. in the U. S. Army, but a specific example of this is our yellow hand grenade. Yellow hand grenades give away an individual's position in the jungle. We dyed our hand grenades green which camouflaged them perfectly.

d. It is recommended the standard ration for jungle operations be the Army "K" rations augmented by the "B" ration wherever possible. The "C" ration, in present use, is too bulky and does not afford sufficient variety. Men tire of it very soon. The "B" rations should be used wherever possible, but only those components should be served that can be eaten directly from the can or box without further cooking. If men have to cook food in their mess kits diarrhea and other intestinal diseases are apt to result.

e. Whenever the tactical situation warrants (such as setting up a defensive position) battalion S-4's should use all available personnel for salvage. Salvagable articles should be re-issued to the troops as soon as possible and all overages should be returned to R.S.O. at the first available opportunity. Native carriers were used in carrying out salvaged articles.

f. Troops must be taught the meaning of the term "supply conscious." Men were told what to take with them into the jungle, but in practically every case too much equipment was carried. As a result, articles of equipment were discarded along the trail shortly after a march began. This was a common tendency--entirely too much equipment was taken into the jungle for combat work.

## SECTION IX

### 135. COMMENTS OF THE DIVISION COMMANDER

We are all indebted to Colonel McClure and the officers of the 35th Infantry for this discussion. I have a few points to call to your attention which may be of interest, but first let me congratulate Sergeant Wenner for the excellent map he made for this conference. I hope that we can have pictures of it taken for reproduction in the division history.

I want to emphasize what Colonel McClure said of the value and importance of wide envelopments. Nine envelopments out of ten, both in actual operations and maneuvers, cut into the enemy's flank too soon. We made a really wide envelopment and went completely around the Jap south flank. It was a perfectly grand job that the officers and men of the 3rd Battalion did in this envelopment. There is one point of interest about the route which I want to call to your attention. I was very much concerned as to whether it was feasible to get around south of the MATANIKAU. I twice flew low over this route. General Hodge and Colonel McClure also flew over this area, as did some battalion commanders. After much careful reconnaissance, we decided that there was a suitable route along the watershed that separates the basin south of Mt. Austen which empties into the LUNGA River, the basin of the southeast fork of the MATANIKAU, and a third basin formed by the southwest fork of the MATANIKAU. The watershed that separated these three basins runs from Mt. Austen on the south curving southwestward and south, in a horseshoe shape toward Hill 43 (See Appendix 3). The route followed was all right up to this point, but then cut north a little too soon resulting in forcing the battalion to go down into and out of several deep draws south of Hill 43. The 3rd Battalion apparently could not find the ridge in the heavy jungle. I offer this not in criticism, but simply to point out that things do not always go exactly as planned. The battalion got what it was going after although it did not get on the ridge. All the more credit to it.

One other opportunity was missed in this action. I had been on Hill 49 at the Division OP during the first day's action. We got a little sniper fire from somewhere which wounded an observer. It appeared that this must have come from Hill 43 or 44, where the high wooded ridge south of Hill 43 afforded enemy observation over the center of the Division's zone-of-action. I had a forward observer from the 89th Field Artillery Battalion fire on Hill 43, and asked him to push his fire up into the woods south of the hill. Something diverted my attention and the fire never got up to the tree line during the whole course of action. Later events proved that this wooded hill was the center of all the trail systems in that area. Artillery fire on that point would have proven highly profitable. This never was done--as is often the case in battle.

During the action of the first battalion which Colonel Leer discussed, I was up on the ridge when "C" Company was stopped on the west of Hill 43. Colonel Leer, very rightly, I think, decided to cease the frontal attack of "C" Company along the ridge. That ridge was not over 20 feet wide. Colonel Leer sent a platoon under the command of the battalion intelligence officer to make a reconnaissance around the south flank, in order to find a way to outmaneuver the enemy's positions astride the ridge. This platoon was told not to fight, but to get information. This was an excellent directive. The platoon found a way around. The route was followed by "B" Company which made the envelopment the next day. It was an excellent move on the part of the battalion commander. After this order had been given to the platoon, I walked back to Hill 43 with Colonels' Leer and Mullen to find a place where mortars could be placed on Hill 43 to fire in front of "C" Company. There were several excellent positions looking across the gulley to the ridge. But the difficulty was to tell from Hill 43, where "C" Company was on the heavily-wooded ridge to the west. It all looked the same from Hill 43. "Colonel Leer, how did you locate "C" Company so that the machine guns and mortars which supported the attack did not fire into "C" Company"?

COLONEL LEER:

"We ran a wire from "C" Company CP on the front line to Hill 43 where we tied in with lines connected to mortars, machine guns and artillery. I had contact with "C" Company's commander. We started firing out forward along the ridge where we knew we would be in front of the troops. The company commander let us know how far in front we were firing. Creeping the fire back and registering as we went, we were able to place the fire where we wanted it."

GENERAL COLLINS:

Very pistol light and signal rockets were also sent up from "C" Company's position but could not be spotted accurately from Hill 43. A few days later we tried signal lights again without success in trying to locate a company of the 161st Infantry in the jungle south of Hill 53. We must find some way of locating our troops in the jungle so as to be able to give them fire support. The method used by Colonel Leer in this case worked fine but will sometimes be too dangerous. Another scheme which might have worked here would have been to have sent a man with a Very pistol up a large tree which towered above the position of Company "C". A Very signal fired from this tree could easily have been seen from Hill 43, and the tree had enough foliage to conceal the signaler from the Japs. Let us try during our current training to develop some practicable solution to this problem.

In such cases where you cannot, with safety, place artillery close to your lines, use mortar fire instead of withdrawing the infantry as Colonel Dick suggested at our last conference. Ground once



gained should not be given up in order to reach the enemy with artillery. 81mm mortars which are quite effective even in the jungle, can usually be placed close enough to our own front lines so that there can be no question of firing into our own troops. Battalion commanders must use judgment as to where they place their mortar and machine gun fire in conjunction with supporting artillery fires. In general, use the mortars on steep reverse slopes for close-in fires, and to cover surprise targets which might take the artillery too long to reach.

I want to emphasize what Major Harrison said about the necessity of battalion supply officers making constant reconnaissances. I believe that had the supply officer of the 3rd Battalion, 27th Infantry done that around Hill 52, Colonel Bush's battalion might have had some water from small springs northeast and northwest of Hill 52. They could have been developed sufficiently to have supplied some water to the companies in the center. The battalion supply officer must be on the lookout for water at all times. The men need plenty of water; one canteen is not enough.

In reference the reduction of the Gifu Strong Point, I want to emphasize what the battalion commander said about not depending too much on information from other units. With no reflection on the units that give the information, their plans and ideas will always be different from yours. You must depend on your own reconnaissance. It is interesting to know that the maneuver which finally closed the pocket was that which Colonel McClure and I projected when we first saw the ground from Hill 27; that is, a double envelopment around the west side of the pocket from Hills 27 and 31. We were dissuaded from this plan by an officer who had been up there and who stated that "you couldn't get through." When I looked from an airplane at the area between Hills 27 and 31, I was inclined to agree with him. We changed our plans to a more-or-less frontal attack, to hold the Japanese while the other battalions marched around to the south. We would have saved time if we had gone about our original plan.

I want to call your attention to the great value of double envelopment such as that used on the Gifu Strong Point. The German army has always taught the use of double envelopments whenever possible. For some curious reason we have been afraid of the double envelopment, usually for fear of an enemy counterattack. It takes tremendous guts to make a double envelopment; guts in making the decision to do it. Let us continue to use double envelopments. Let us grab these damn Japs from both directions and not let them get away. We can use a double envelopment if we have the guts to do it, and I know we have.

Now, as to why we didn't use tanks initially in the Gifu attack. We do not have any tanks in the division. I wish we had a few. The Marines were using the only tanks on the Island along the Beach Road. They were not available to us. When we finally did get one, it did a splendid job and I wish we had more for Captain Doose

to play around with. I might say that only an audacious tanker like Captain Deese would ever have dreamed of using tanks over such terrain. I doubt if they have ever before been used 1500 feet above sea level in thick tropical jungle. That the scheme worked is a tribute to Captain Deese and his crew. I have recommended the three of them for the D. S. C.

With reference to the broadcasts, I know that a great many officers feel that this was a mistake. But let me give you a bit broader point of view. First of all, the Japs have in their possession thousands of American prisoners-of-war. We can get very little information as to who they are, where they are or what is being given them. If we could have captured a thousand Japs in this campaign, instead of the one hundred and twenty-nine that we did, we would have had a lever on the Japs to help force them to give us information and to take good care of our people. That is one reason why the corps commander went to such great lengths to make these Japs surrender. The next point is that the publicity that got around that the Marines took no prisoners, forced the Japs to hold out to the last ditch, causing us more casualties than were necessary. We take prisoners to get information. Capture also tends to break the morale of the enemy. The Japs pride themselves on not surrendering. If we can get them to start surrendering we will make a great wedge in their morale. Their greatest asset is their willingness to die. If we can break that down we will have accomplished a lot.

## CHAPTER V

### OPERATIONS OF 161ST INFANTRY, JANUARY 10TH TO FEBRUARY 14TH

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#### SECTION I

#### OPERATIONS OF JANUARY 10TH TO 21ST

Colonel James L. Dalton, II, AUS, Commanding.

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136. PRELIMINARY ACTION, JANUARY 10TH TO 14TH.--The 161st Infantry, less 3rd Battalion and AT and Cannon Company, landed on Guadalcanal 30 December 1942. The balance of the regiment landed on 4 January 1943. On 6 January 1943 the regiment relieved the 35th Infantry in the perimeter defense of Henderson Field. The regimental commander was informed of the attack plans of the 25th Infantry Division, and all key personnel were kept abreast of the situation and plans. On 10 January the 161st Infantry was directed to furnish one battalion to be attached to the 27th Infantry. The 1st Battalion was selected on that date and relieved from the perimeter defense. On 11 January that battalion moved up to the Matanikau River and the battalion commander reported to the commanding officer, 27th Infantry. He was directed to secure the left flank of the 27th Infantry and to place a block on the Matanikau River just south of Hill 50. The battalion moved and occupied Hills 50, 51, 52, 54 and placed part of one company to make the block.

137. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 14TH.--On 14th January Company "I", at the direction of the division commander, was moved up the Matanikau River and attached to 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry. It was disposed to join with the 35th Infantry on Hill 44, to cover the supply boathead on the Matanikau, and had the company less two platoons in the river valley between the boathead and east block.

138. OPERATIONS ON JANUARY 15TH.--On the morning of the 15 January, the 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry received orders to move one platoon of Company "I" westward into the Matanikau valley to clear out any Japs that might be in there and to bridge the gap between the 27th Infantry on Hill 53 and the 35th Infantry south of the Matanikau River. From the high clearings of Hills 51 and 53 the ground falls off to the south at about 45 degrees. It does not fall evenly to the river but is broken by a hog-back ridge running parallel to the river course. On its north side this hog-back has a slope similar to that of the slope down from the clearing, but on its south side fell sheer into the river, making a gorge. This is characteristic of the Matanikau Valley, and the same formation is found in the river's southern branch. The sides of the hog-back are serrated by steep gullies cutting transversely from the ridge. The foliage is very thick, and the earth is mud on top of the coral. Such is the terrain into which Company "I" moved to clear out on the morning of 15 January. Little was known of Japanese strength or dispositions therein. One platoon of "I" Company, at 1300 on 15 January, moved in past the east block and advanced about 500 yards farther but was halted on a trail by Japanese machine gun fire at close range. Darkness prevented further action. On the next day two platoons of Company "I" renewed this attack, met opposition and maneuvered to the north to set up a 60mm base of fire and make an envelopment. The maneuvering force could not make its way through the jungle and came out on Hill 52. The holding force was directed to withdraw to permit a 60mm concentration to be fired. This was done but the 60mm fire was not effective because of bursting in tree tops.

139. OPERATIONS OF JANUARY 17TH.--On 17 January a platoon of Company "I" resumed the frontal attack; a half squad of Company "I" extended the 27th Infantry block to the river, and a half platoon under Captain LeMont moved into the pocket from east of Hill 53 to flank the Japanese. This flanking force followed a trail leading towards the Japanese left rear. The force was stopped by Japanese machine gun fire and two officers were wounded, one of whom was the company commander. The force withdrew.

140. OPERATIONS OF JANUARY 18TH.--On 18 January, Company "C" relieved Company "I" and renewed the attack. An envelopment to the left was attempted, but the enveloping force was unable to climb up out of the river gorge and was forced to retire down the river.

141. OPERATIONS OF JANUARY 19TH.--a. On 19 January a platoon of Company "C" attempted to cut into the Japanese left rear from east of Hill 53. The platoon advanced about 400 yards and was stopped and flattened out by Japanese machine gun fire. A platoon of Company "B" followed in to relieve the pressure and after short action, both platoons withdrew to Hill 52. In the evening of this day the 2nd Battalion, 161st Infantry relieved the 3rd Battalion, 27th Infantry on Hill 53 and on the west block. The 1st Battalion reverted to the 161st Infantry. The CP of the 161st Infantry moved to Hill 51. Prior to

this date artillery and 81mm mortar fire support were not available because of uncertainty of troop locations of the 35th Infantry, and because of 27th Infantry troop dispositions in the area.

b. On the evening of the 19th permission was granted to the commanding officer of the 1st Battalion to employ mortar fire in the pocket. Company "D" was moved up to Hill 52 and opened heavy harassing fire that night.

c. The mortar fire apparently had effect for during the early morning of 20 January the Japanese made a determined effort to break through the west block then held by 2nd Battalion, 161st Infantry. Further attempts to come out over Hill 53 were made during the day of 20 January. These attempts were stopped by 60mm fire of the 2d Battalion, 161st Infantry. The mortar fire continued all day of the 20th and Company "A" relieved Company "C" in the pocket. Company "B" relieved units of the 2nd Battalion on the west block.

142. OPERATIONS OF JANUARY 21ST.--a. On 21 January Company "A" attacked and with the aid of mortar support pushed through to the west block, thereby clearing the pocket.

b. The Japanese organization along the hog-back appeared to be a series of bivouacs generally on the south side. These were located to minimize the effect of our artillery. All around defense by automatic weapons had been set up to block approaches to the bivouac areas. This organization was similar to that found in other valleys of the Matanikau.

c. In clearing out this pocket the 1st Battalion killed 131 Japanese by small arms fire, an estimated 50 by mortar fire, and took 35 prisoners. It also took one 77mm field piece, five heavy machine guns, four light machine guns, and numerous rifles. The 2nd Battalion, during the breakout attempted on 19-20 January, killed a known 29 Japanese and an uncounted number on the day of 20 January. Just how many Japanese were in the pocket on 16 January can not be stated. But allowing for those who may have escaped between 16 and 21 January a fair estimate would set the figure between 300 and 400 Japanese.

d. On 20 January the 2nd Battalion, 161st Infantry took Hill X and on 21 January took Hill Y. Minor enemy opposition was encountered at each hill.

## SECTION II

### OPERATIONS OF JANUARY 21ST TO FEBRUARY 4TH

Colonel James L. Dalton, II, AUS, Commanding

143. SECURITY OF THE SOUTH FLANK.--a. On 21 January the balance of the 161st Infantry moved up into Hills 52 and 53. On 21 January an order was received from the division commander directing the 161st Infantry to make the main effort of the 25th Division on the left flank, secure Hill 87 and prepare to continue the attack to the north-west. The 161st Infantry was also to secure the south flank of the corps in its zone-of-action. The regimental plan was to have the 1st Battalion secure the south flank and to have the regiment, less the 1st Battalion, attack in column of battalions from Hill Y towards Hill 87.

b. On 22 January the 2nd Battalion jumped off from Hill Y for Hill 87. Shortly after the jump-off the situation altered, and the plans and orders of the division commander were altered to fit the new situation. The mission of the 161st Infantry was changed to secure the left flank of the corps and contain any enemy encountered.

c. Since the 2nd Battalion was already committed it continued on to Hill N by a trail. Minor opposition was encountered. The 3rd Battalion moved via Hill 57 to assembly area on the "Snake." The 1st Battalion occupied both river blocks and Hills 50 to 53 inclusive.

d. From the 23rd to the 26th of January the 161st Infantry continued patrolling and extended its holdings to include Hills 90 and 90A to the 2nd Battalion, and Hill 89 and Q-R-S to the 3rd Battalion. The 1st Battalion took over Hills X, Y, and Z.

e. On 26 January the 25th Division was relieved by the 2nd Marine Division and the 161st Infantry passed to corps control with mission unchanged.

f. On 27 January the 1st Battalion relieved the 182nd Infantry on Hills 27, 43, and 44.

g. On 29 January the 2nd Battalion was called into corps reserve in assembly position at the foot of Wright Road. The 3rd Battalion took over Hills 90, 90A and 91 on 28 January.

h. January ended with this situation unchanged.

i. About this time the possibility was imminent of a major Japanese attack on Guadalcanal. On 1 February the 161st Infantry less 3rd Battalion, reverted to the 25th Infantry Division and was ordered to occupy and defend the beach front from Kokumbona to the Matanikau River. The 2nd Battalion was to be kept in assembly area. On this date the 1st Battalion moved from its security positions and occupied the regimental beach sector. The 3rd Battalion took over security and patrolling to secure the corps' left flank from Hill 27 to Hill 90A. This situation continued through 3 February.

### SECTION III

#### OPERATIONS OF FEBRUARY 4TH TO 14TH

Colonel James L. Dalton, II, AUS, Commanding

144. ATTACK AND PURSUIT TO THE TENARO.--a. At this time the 147th Infantry was attacking to the west at the Bonegi River. Other elements of the 25th Division were assembled in reserve. On 4 February the 161st Infantry was directed to pass through the 147th Infantry and to attack to the west towards Cape Esperance. Reconnaissance and liaison missions were carried out and the 3rd Battalion was moved down from the hills and assembled on Hill 99. On 5 February the 3rd Battalion, 161st Infantry was in behind the 3rd Battalion, 147th Infantry and the 2nd Battalion, 161st Infantry was in assembly area on the west bank of the Bonegi River.

b. On 5 February the 161st Infantry was attached to the Americal Division with orders unchanged.

c. At this point, the terrain in the zone from the Bonegi River to Cape Esperance should be considered. The coastal plain is very narrow, from 300 to 600 yards, and cut with washboard regularity by fairly shallow streams flowing to the sea. The banks of these streams are marshy often for 200 yards on either side. In between streams are numerous sloughs with boggy borders. Virtually every stream and bordering marsh is covered with thick jungle growth. There were no bridges. On the beach the jungle growth and coconut trees grew very close to the mean water line. The high ground extends north towards the beach in long finger ridges, often with many twists and pockets. The tops of the ridges are for the most part grassy, and the valleys are jungles with the growth extending out to cover the northern tips. The whole setup then presents a narrow defile with the sea on one side and on the other a close series of ridges and woods. The Japanese indicated a tendency to hold on reverse slopes of the ridges with fire laid from defilade seaward across the defile. The strength, dispositions and intentions of the opposing Japanese were not clearly known, though resistance up to that time had been spirited.

d. Supporting fire was to be given by the 147th FA of the Americal Division in direct support, and other elements of the Americal Division artillery in general support. Battery A, 97th FA (Pack) was attached for fire support and to assist in supply in the hills. Company "A", 57th Engineers was attached for normal combat team duties. The 6th Marines under the Americal Division were to secure the left flank of advance. The 147th Infantry was to secure the beach eastward from a point 1000 yards in rear of 161st Infantry front line.

e. The regimental plan was to attack with the 2nd and 3rd Battalions in assault; the 2nd Battalion on the left, with the 1st Battalion in reserve. Boundary between assault battalions ran from

Hill 123 (to 3rd Battalion) to Hill 138 (to 2nd Battalion). The AT Company was to defend the beach from the front line to 1000 yards to east. The Cannon Company was to provide installation security. Transportation was to be by motor along the coast and by pack mule in the hills.

f. At 1000 6 February, the 161st Infantry passed through the 147th Infantry and attacked towards Cape Esperance.

g. On 6 February the advance elements of the 147th Infantry were on a line from Hill 123 to the sea.

h. The 3rd Battalion advanced in two-company front to the Umasani River and patrolled to the west thereof. The 2nd Battalion moved up onto Hill 127 and thence to Hill 132. The 147th Infantry moved back and relieved the 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry on the beach. The regimental CP was located at Tassafaronga.

i. On 7 February the 3rd Battalion reached Hill 137 and secured its flank by occupying Hill 141. The 2nd Battalion moved across the Umasani and occupied Hills 142 and 143. The 1st Battalion moved to an assembly area just west of the Bonegi River. Efforts to get rations to the 2nd Battalion Hill 142 failed as the route was inaccessible to pack animals. Carrier train was attempted but failed because of darkness.

j. On 8 February the 3rd Battalion moved forward, still in two-company front, and occupied a line extending from Hill 156 to the beach. Contact was by patrol. The 2nd Battalion moved from Hill 142 across the Segilau River and up to Hill 151 via Hill 153. Contact with the 3rd Battalion on its right was made by patrol. The 1st Battalion moved to an assembly position just in rear of Hill 137. The regimental CP moved to Hill 137.

k. Only sporadic and disorganized resistance was encountered by the 3rd Battalion. The area around both the Umasani and the Segilau Rivers held extensive bivouac areas. These were for the most part abandoned. There were, however, Japs still remaining in different parts of each area and these had to be liquidated. For the most part the Japanese were in poor condition and were living among their own diseased and unburied dead. In most instances Japanese would defend briefly and then drift back toward the hills. None ever came out against the 2nd Battalion but it is believed they carefully avoided that flank unit and either took to living on the country or died of disease and starvation.

l. Plans to carry rations via Hill 147 to the 2nd Battalion on Hill 150 were frustrated when the 3rd Battalion failed to clear out a group of Japanese at the base of Hill 147 before dark on 8th February.



m. At the close of the day it was the considered estimate of the regimental commander that the Japanese were not defending nor delaying, but were fleeing or had fled; and it was decided that a pursuit was in order. This decision was confirmed by a night message from the Commanding General, Americal Division which stated that the 2nd Battalion, 132nd Infantry had reached Visale without opposition. The 1st Battalion was directed to pass through the 3rd Battalion on the morning of 9 February and pursue vigorously to Cape Esperance.

n. On 8 February the 147th F. A. and Battery "A", 97th F. A. moved up from the Bonegi River and Battery "A", 97th and one battery of the 147th F. A. occupied firing positions in the vicinity of Hill 137. Both batteries placed neutralizing fire on Japanese sniper areas which harassed the right flank of the 3rd Battalion during the night 8-9.

o. On 9 February the 1st Battalion moved early from assembly position at Hill 137 and passed through the 3rd Battalion at Doma Cove. The 3rd Battalion and AT Company assembled at Doma Cove and prepared to follow the 1st Battalion. The 2nd Battalion moved down to the foot of Hill 147 into assembly position in regimental reserve. The 1st Battalion moved rapidly up the coast road, patrolling off the road to the beach and inland to the jungles edge. No organized resistance was met. At the Sasa River about one platoon of Japanese were surprised but due to premature firing by a rifleman about half the Japanese got away. The advance continued, crossing the Tanamba River and entering the village of Tenaru about 1400, 9 February. Here the 161st Infantry met the 2nd Battalion, 132nd Infantry which arrived a few minutes later.

p. Upon completing the pursuit the 161st Infantry drew back to the east and with their west flank on the Tenamba River organized and occupied a beach defense position eastward to include Doma Cove. The 1st Battalion defended from the Tenamba River to Aruligo Point, the 3rd Battalion from Aruligo Point to 3500 yards east, and the 2nd Battalion from there to the east side of Doma Cove. Elements of AT Company and Cannon Company were attached to each battalion. The 3rd Battalion, less one rifle company and the heavy weapons company, was in regimental reserve. The regimental CP was set up northeast of clearing 183. Battery A, 97th F. A. took up firing position in the east edge of the clearing marked 184. The 147th F. A. had been recalled to the east by the Americal Division Artillery. At this time Company "A", 57th Engineers, which had been efficiently making and maintaining roads, took over establishment of a water point on the Sasa River. The defense plan was sent to the Commanding General, Americal Division and request made for supply of rations, ammunition, and wire by barge to Doma Cove. All but wire came on 11 February.

q. The period 10-13 February was spent in improving beach defenses, patrolling, salvaging Japanese materiel, recovering telephone wire, and disposing of their dead.

r. In the operations of the 161st Infantry 6-13 February an advance of 11 miles was made, 18 miles of cross-country march were covered, 265 Japanese were killed, 30 Japanese were captured and numerous items of Japanese marine, motor transport, ordnance, engineer, and medical equipment and stores were taken. Strict inventory was not practicable as all elements of the regiment moved forward rapidly and it was felt that ground was more important than materiel in this operation. Many documents were taken in bivouac areas and sent to higher headquarters. Bivouacs increased in size and apparent importance as the advance moved westward. In every case these were located along stream beds and in very dense foliage.

s. On 13 February two patrols of about a platoon each were sent out, one to reconnoiter for a north-south trail on east side of Mt. Gallego and the other for a north side trail on the west of that mountain. One moved inland from Doma Cove and came out at Savoli Cove on the south shore having located an excellent trail along the Umasani River leading to the south shore. The other went in from Aruligo and found no passage way to exist on the west side of Gallego. Both patrols returned by way of Visale.

t. On 13 February orders from the Americal Division and from the Commanding General, 25th Division, directed the 161st Inf. to move by water to the vicinity of Koli Point to organize beach defense of that area. Units were moved to assembly areas at Doma Cove.

u. On the morning of 14 February the regiment, less the Service Company and transportation, loaded on six LCT's at Doma Cove at 0800 and completed loading at 0830. The convoy arrived off Koli Point at about 1130. A battalion and an attached separate company with all arms and T/BA ammunition, plus kitchens and one day's rations, were loaded on two LCT's. There was room to spare. T/BA baggage moved by motor convoy. Service Company moved on 15 February. It is believed that two LCT's can transport an entire rifle battalion with complete T/BA equipment (less motor transport) and ammunition, plus one day's rations, and in addition six  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton trucks. The weight capacity of these boats is 180 tons. The cruising speed is 7 knots per hour.

## SECTION IV

### SUPPLY AND TRANSPORTATION

Major Slastcho Katsarsky

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145. SUPPLY AND TRANSPORTATION.--a. On 6 January 1943, the regiment less 3rd Battalion, less Cannon Company, less Service Company, took up the perimeter defense of Henderson Field. The 3rd Battalion was employed in the area east of the Ilu River approximately 2000 yards south of the beach. The Cannon and Service Companies remained in the original bivouac area on Red Beach.

b. During the afternoon of 10th January an order was received by regiment that it would move to a staging area in the coconut grove ~~along~~ fighter strip Number 2. This move was started at daybreak the morning of the 11th. The plan was to move the kitchens and equipment with our organic vehicles, and the troops were to be marched to that area. At noon the regimental commander was notified by Division Headquarters that the 1st Battalion would be attached to the 27th Infantry on Hill 54. At 1400 a call was received by the S-4 from Division G-4 that 15 trucks would be used to shuttle the battalion at 1500. Included in the 15 trucks were 10 which were being used to move the regiment. The S-4 set out immediately to locate all 2½ ton trucks, jeeps and weapons carriers that were moving the regiment and ordered them to report to the Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion without delay. The move of the 1st Battalion to Hill 54 and the regiment to the staging area was completed before darkness that day.

c. As soon as the trucks were returned from the 1st Battalion move, the ammunition officer drew from the division ammunition dump one unit of fire for each of the following weapons: 60 and 81mm mortars and the Anti-tank guns. In addition to this he also drew 1600 hand grenades and 400, M-9 grenades. This ammunition was sent to the South Bridge early in the evening and was trucked by jeep the next morning to Hill 54. The following morning one unit of machine gun ammunition was delivered to the South Bridge which was trucked by jeep from there to Hill 54.

d. The S-4 of the 1st Battalion recommended that kitchens not be moved forward due to the terrain and conditions of the roads. The kitchens were immediately converted into bake shops and baked goods were taken to the battalion twice daily along with "C" rations and ammunition.

e. The road along the Matanikau River was for jeeps and weapons carriers only, so all loads brought to the South Bridge had to be transferred to jeeps. In addition to the heavy flow of traffic which was required to supply the units in this area, there was also an excessive amount of sightseers who were doing this road no good, as well as tying up traffic for more important business. The engineers were running road construction crews along the road at all times. Their job evidently was to build roads, and not to maintain them as they were limited in personnel. Regardless of the condition of the roads, they did a splendid piece of work which aided the supply units to complete their mission as far as it was humanly possible.

f. Shortly after the 1st Battalion had been committed, a forward battalion D.P. was established on the west side of the South Matanikau River bridge. Class I and V supplies were transported up the jeep trail by jeeps to the battalion CP and by carrying parties to the troops. A water point was established midway on the jeep trail above the South Bridge. This eliminated a long haul for water.

g. The transportation for this battalion consisted of six jeeps and one weapons carrier. All vehicles were used for transporting supplies and water.

h. In order to help in the maintenance of the jeep trail on Hill 55, the pioneer platoon of the battalion was given the assignment to assist the engineers on this particular hill.

i. On January 16th the Cannon Company personnel was put under Division control for the purpose of hauling supplies up the Matanikau River by boat from Barkman Bridge to the 35th Infantry at the base of Hills 50 and 44. The Cannon Company was complimented highly by the Division G-4 for this work.

j. On January 18th, word was received by regiment from division headquarters that the regiment less the 1st and 3rd Battalions would move to the vicinity of Hill 52. A reconnaissance was made by the S-4 to determine the location for the Service Company and a D.P. The area on the east bank of the Matanikau River near the Barkman Bridge was selected. The following morning the Service Company was moved. The D.P. and motor maintenance was immediately set up and put into operation. The following day a forward ammunition D.P. and motor maintenance was set up at the South Bridge. This proved to be very satisfactory as it saved considerable time and aided in the servicing of the vehicles that were traveling between the South Bridge and Hill 52.

k. The distance from the end of the jeep trail to the loading company was 4000 yards. This necessitated the use of carrying parties which were furnished by both battalions. At this time a request was made to the G-4 for native carriers. This request was approved and the next morning 109 natives reported to the R.S.O. A camp was established for them at the South Bridge under the supervision of an officer and several N.C.O.'s. The balance of the day

was spent in setting up their camp. The following morning word was received by the S-4 from the officers in charge of the natives that only 40 natives were available for duty. We had been informed the previous day that one seventh of the natives would be off duty each day as they would work only six days per week. After a check was made it was found that 49 were sick with everything from a stomach ache to sore feet. At this time we were also informed that the months of January and February were the sick months for the natives. This was the regiments first experience with the native carriers. It was found that those natives that did work were very good and set quite a pace for the soldier carriers. On the 20th, a forward D.P. was established in the vicinity of Hill 52 as jeeps could travel to this point. The carriers picked up rations at this point and carried from there,

l. On January 21st, the 3rd Battalion moved to Hill 53, which brought the balance of the regiment into action. That afternoon orders were issued by the regimental commander that at daybreak the next day the 2nd and 3rd Battalions would move out from Hill 53 to Hills X, Y and Z and then in a northwesterly direction to a point on Hill 87 in a column of battalions with the 2nd Battalion leading. Each man was given one "C" ration to carry. At 1425, orders were received from Division Headquarters that the 3rd Battalion would pull back to Hill 57 and go from there to the "Snakes" back. Regimental headquarters was then moved to Hill C on the "Snakes" back. The 3rd Battalion moved from there to the vicinity of Hills 87, 88, and 89. In the meantime the 2nd Battalion continued their push to Hills 87, 89, and 90. While passing Hill 87, two companies were fed supper by the 3rd Battalion. This battalion moved so fast that it was impossible to deliver supplies to them. When the battalion reached Hill 90 it was attached to the 27th Infantry for supplies, which regiment at the time was receiving supplies by lighter to Kokumbona.

m. During the morning of the 24th a forward regimental D.P. was established on Hill C, on the "Snakes" back in order to speed up supplies to the 3rd Battalion Headquarters and Anti-Tank Companies. The engineers at this time were constructing a jeep trail to Hills 87, 88 and 89.

n. During the afternoon of January 26th the supply sergeant of "E" Company came to R.S.O. and stated that the 2nd Battalion would reach Hill 91 that night. Food was immediately loaded on a truck and was taken to what was thought to be Hill 91, but later turned out to be Hill 96. The supply sergeant with two men was left to guard the rations and to make contact with his organization when they arrived. Early the next morning a call was received from the 2nd Battalion that they had been unable to locate the food. A rendezvous was arranged by the S-4 and the battalion executive officer. As soon as contact was made the rations were delivered to the battalion. Later that day a request was made by the C.O., 2nd Battalion for "K" rations which were to be used by a hundred man patrol. The rations were drawn from the corps dump and delivered to the battalion

that night. The next morning the patrol started out but was recalled by division headquarters. When the patrol returned, an attempt was made to pick up the rations for future patrols, but it was found the men had either eaten or disposed of them prior to their return. This battalion was then moved to an area in the vicinity of Wright Road under division control.

o. On February 1st the regimental headquarters and cannon companies were moved to Hill 85 while the 1st Battalion was moved to a beach defense area which extended from the west bank of the Matanikau River to the base of Hill 99. On February 4th the 3rd Battalion moved to a bivouac area in the vicinity of Kokumbona. At this time supply was normal.

p. After the various moves, the R.S.O. with the aid of the battalion S-4's and the munitions officer began salvaging all Class I, II and V supplies from the areas; sixty percent of the requisitions for Class II supplies were filled from the salvage pile. As near as can be estimated three truck loads of ammunition were transported to the South Bridge and one to Hill 87 when the regiment originally occupied these positions. When the salvage work started, twelve truck loads of ammunition were hauled back from the South Bridge area and eight from Hill 87 area. With the exception of special types of ammunition, this regiment could have fought with the ammunition left on the ground by other units prior to our occupation.

q. On February 4th orders were received that the regiment would be attached to the Americal Division and that on February 5th would relieve the 147th Infantry in the vicinity of the Bonegi River. A reconnaissance was made the morning of the 5th and the relief was completed by the 6th.

r. The R.S.O. established a D.P. and motor maintenance 200 yards west of the Bonegi River.

146. PLAN OF ATTACK.--a. The plan of attack was for the 3rd Battalion to move up the beach and the 2nd Battalion on the left starting from Hill 127. One days rations and water were delivered to the 2nd Battalion by pack mules which were furnished by the 97th F.A. Battalion. The 3rd Battalion was supplied by jeeps and trucks along the beach. Once the 2nd Battalion pushed off Hill 127, contact was lost with them for four days as far as supplies were concerned. On the second day rations and water were taken to Hill 137 by carrying parties furnished from Cannon Company. These supplies were never received by the 2nd Battalion as the Battalion S-4 had made an earlier reconnaissance of the route and on return was unable to lead the carrying party so he detailed his sergeant to complete his mission. The directions which were passed on by the Battalion S-4 were evidently misunderstood or confused as the delivery was made in the 3rd Battalion area on Hill 137. The next morning at daybreak, this battalion pushed off for their objective, Hill 149. Again an attempt was made to get water and rations to them. Arrangements were made with the

97th F. A. Battalion to have their pack train carry the supplies. A guard and pioneer detail was furnished from the Cannon Company. When the pack train arrived at a point west of the Segilau River, the mules bogged down and couldn't go farther. During this time regimental headquarters and Cannon Company and the 1st Battalion were moving forward to the vicinity of Hill 137. When they reached the vicinity of Bunina Pt., word was received that a company of Japanese were holding up the 3rd Battalion west of the Segilau River. In the meantime a carrying party of 100 men was organized from Cannon Company and other units to be ready to move off with the 2nd Battalion water and rations as soon as the pocket was cleared. The pocket was cleaned out enough at 1730 to permit the carriers to start on their mission to Hill 149. Due to the late start and the darkness, the party lost its way and ended up on the beach for the night. Early next morning word was received from the regimental commander that the 2nd Battalion would come out of the hills at a point north of Hill 147 on the beach. Steps were immediately taken to find a bivouac area for the battalion and to move their kitchens up. Contact was made with the battalion commander at 1030 and directions were given him regarding location of his area. Within an hour after the arrival of the battalion a hot meal was served. Later that day the Regimental CP was moved forward to Aruligo. The 1st Battalion passed through the 3rd Battalion area and took up beach defense with their left flank at the Tenamba River; the 3rd Battalion on their right and the 2nd Battalion extending to the east side of Doma Cove.

b. The next day, February 10th, the Service Company moved to Doma Cove where a D.P. was set up. While the regiment was attached to the Americal Division, Class I and V supplies were drawn from Kokumbona. After the R.S.O. had moved to Doma Cove, it was decided that the distance to Kokumbona was too great so it was planned to have supplies shipped by water. Word was received from the Americal Division that an L.C.T. would be at Cape Esperance at 1000 on the morning of the 10th. The S-4, with a detail and trucks left for Cape Esperance to meet the L.C.T. but found the road ended 200 yards west of the Tenamba River. The vehicles were left at this point and the party set out on foot. After a short walk the party came to a battalion CP of the 132nd Infantry. The executive officer furnished a boat which was used to make contact with the L.C.T. at Cape Esperance. At this time the S-4 decided that a D.P. would be more accessible from Doma Cove than from Cape Esperance. The L.C.T. was guided to Doma Cove where a sixty day supply of rations was unloaded. From this point on supply was again normal.

147. LESSONS LEARNED.--a. That sufficient time be given battalion S-4's to make reconnaissance.

b. That alternate supply routes be planned when available.

c. When taking over an area that has been occupied by other units, to make a survey of the supplies within that area thereby eliminating unnecessary hauling.

d. Company supply sergeants should be present when issues are made from the battalion D.P. to insure that the correct issue is received and to supervise distribution by carrying parties within the company.

e. That the soldier is over-equipped in warfare of this type. This was evidenced by the amount of equipment that was discarded.

f. Kitchens should not be moved with companies unless a thorough reconnaissance has been made to insure that the roads will permit it.



## SECTION V

### CRITIQUE AND LESSONS LEARNED

Colonel James L. Dalton, II, AUS, Commanding

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148. CRITIQUE.--a. The clearing of the Matanikau Pocket was a difficult job. Clearing any jungle pocket will always be a difficulty. The case of the Matanikau Pocket was further complicated by the employment of an attached company under an attached battalion. The important qualities of mutual understanding and confidence cannot be created by a combat order.

b. A key to the Matanikau Pocket apparently lay in heavy fire support. Though good reasons probably existed for withholding this support it must be admitted that a major element was thereby left out of the tactical operation. The operations in the pocket exhibited one bad characteristic. There was too much breaking contact. There may have been reasons for this but it did slow down the job and probably made it more costly.

c. A further example of the importance of tactical unity was illustrated in the actions at the west block on 19-20 January. For reasons adequate at the time this block was manned by two rifle platoons, each from a different company. When the Japanese tried a break out unusual difficulty and trouble arose because of lack of unity and lack of familiarity and confidence between the two units.

d. The importance of early and vigorous reconnaissance for new supply routes is illustrated in the instances where the battalion making the jungle envelopment went without rations for one or more days due to lack of knowledge of how to get supplies to new objectives. The use of an animal pack train in this country is practical but not reliable. The animals are sensitive to steep slopes, marshes, swift rivers, and jungle trails. Neither do the animals have the interest nor the will-to-do of a human carrier. In this last connection it is well to point out that basing a projected supply route on the advance of an adjacent unit is a very critical matter. On 8 February the supply of much needed rations to the 2nd Battalion, 161st Infantry hinged on the 3rd Battalion advancing past Hill 147 to open a route up that hill. The advance did not clear Hill 147 until dark and no rations got up.

e. Artillery should be attached during a pursuit. Though the artillery support was accurate and enthusiastic, at several points confusion arose as to what the next step by the artillery would be. The battalion commander would get permission to displace forward and have this partially executed when Division Artillery Headquarters

would order return to positions. In the pursuit this quickly destroyed the value of the artillery. The infantry commander of the pursuit should decide when to displace.

f. The pursuit was rendered particularly difficult by the numerous streams and the poor roads. It would have been hard enough at best, but the terrain conditions resolved the operations mainly into a problem of getting supplies and communications forward. The passage forward of a few leading vehicles was mis-leading. Several vehicles later the bottom had fallen out of the road and a great deal of maintenance was necessary or a new road had to be made.

g. The capacity of the LCT boats and the ease and speed of loading and unloading tactical units on these boats is worthy of notice. Movements up to six hours are feasible with such loadings as cited above and provide a very convenient method of moving troops where landing is unopposed.

h. The value of parallel lines of communications of infantry and supporting artillery was illustrated in many instances throughout operations of the 161st Infantry. In several cases the artillery radio was the only means for both artillery and infantry.

149. LESSONS LEARNED.--The lessons learned in the operations of the 161st Infantry are much the same as lessons learned in operations of other divisional units. The more outstanding are cited here for the record:

a. When any job is to be done the right man should be selected. Give him all available support, and demand results.

b. Maintain unity of command and tactical integrity as far as possible.

c. Fire support is a vital part of tactical operations even in the jungle.

d. Repairing a broken contact with an enemy in offensive is time consuming and costly.

e. Reconnaissance for new supply routes must be constant and vigorous.

f. Type "C" ration is not suited to jungle warfare and should be replaced.

## SECTION VI

### 150. COMMENTS OF THE DIVISION COMMANDER

I am going to first discuss one of two problems presented by Major Katsarsky with reference to supply and evacuation. I want to emphasize what he said about the necessity for salvage. No one knows when we start an operation just how much ammunition and food is going to be needed in an area and we often have to bring up more food and ammunition than we actually expend in action. When a new organization takes over it must take over the supplies that it finds on the ground. That is one reason why when the 161st Infantry relieved the 27th Infantry on Hills 52 and 53, and had no real opposition thereafter, except in the Matanikau Pocket, that it salvaged and hauled out considerably more supplies than it had taken in. That is the proper way to do it. Any relieving unit must take over the supplies, mortar ammunition particularly, rather than have the unit being relieved move it out. That is the standard practice in this division. It is essential that the last unit to occupy do a thorough salvaging job. The 161st Infantry did such a job in cleaning up the "Galloping Horse" when the regiment finally left it.

I have heard a good many things said against the "C" ration. I'm going to add a few words in its defense. It probably needs modification, but what would we have done without the "C" ration? The "C" ration saved lives here more than once. It has the advantage of being able to be eaten out of the container, which cut down immeasurably, diarrhea resulting from dirty mess kits. It is easy to heat in the field, stands considerable exposure without deteriorating, and is more likely to reach you fresh than any ration packed in paper, however waxed. The contents probably can be improved but until something definite is developed we can be thankful for the "C" ration.

The only question in respect to evacuation which hasn't been touched on in our conferences to date I am going to mention now simply because it has come to my mind at this time. Prior to the opening of the campaign, we had issued what I regard as a very important memorandum (Administrative Memorandum #7) with reference to that part of the Graves Registration Service which we have to handle within the division. It became necessary on the ground to issue additional orders to put that memorandum into effect. It is mandatory first of all, to bury the dead right on the ground instead of littering them to the rear. I saw dead men being littered from Mt. Austen and from Hill 52 over terrible trails and under terribly hot sun, when our wounded men needed to be taken to the rear. We simply cannot do this. We all revere our dead, but I am sure that they would want us to bury them where they fell, while we go on with the fight, and concentrate on taking care of the wounded. The next point is that I regret to learn that there are still some 10 or 12 men whose bodies we cannot find. Before we go into battle again I want everyone to remember when you bury some man or officer you must mark his grave clearly. You must bury the dead far

enough off the trail so that, when the trail is extended, a bulldozer does not carry away the cross erected to mark the grave and cover the grave so we cannot find it again. One dogtag must be left on the body and one on the cross or grave. Turn in the man's name but you leave the two dogtags in that manner. That was not always done. Let us be on the lookout and comply with the memorandum.

Now, let us turn to the tactical side of the picture. I am going to touch upon some points not particularly pertinent to today's presentation because this is our last conference in which we will go into the details of the tactical operations. No one has mentioned the technique of establishing the blocks across wooded valleys which have become so important in this jungle warfare. We were very successful in pocketing the Japs on a number of occasions. A very essential part in the final closing of these pockets was the establishing of these blocks. I saw a number of them. Most of them were well constructed but some were not. There are three essentials for a good block: First of all, a good barbed wire obstacle completely across the wooded stream bottom, this is essential because the breakout is always tried at night. Secondly, weapons should be emplaced to cover this wire with interlocking bands of fire. And third, a field of fire in front of the wire at least beyond hand-grenade range. These can best be cleared by bolo, by trimming the undergrowth at least to the height of a man. There is no time to chop down the big trees, and there will never be time, before dark, to clear the area clean. The essential part is to have a proper field of fire so that the Jap cannot get up close to throw hand grenades, or rush the block, before you can see him or put your fire down on him.

The reduction of the pocket in the Matanikau was one of the toughest assignments that any unit had in the division and was comparable to the task of cleaning up the Gifu strongpoint by the 35th Infantry. It was unfortunate that the location of the Japs in the Matanikau pocket simply could not be determined from Hill 52 or 53. The jungle was so thick and the ravines so steep that even the men who came out of the pocket and looked down could not tell us where they came from or where the Japs were. This was further complicated by the fact that the block south of 53 had to be left in position; if it was cleared to permit artillery fire, the Japs would have escaped to the west. So we had the situation with the artillery located near Hill 49, our own troops on Hills 50, 51 and 52 in the line of fire, and with the Japs immediately below them; and then the block south of 53 in direct prolongation of the fire. We simply could not take a chance with aerial bombardment and it was an almost impossible situation as far as our artillery was concerned. That left only the 81mm mortar for fire support. I am sorry that the battalion commander in charge of the operation is not here. In my opinion, and I was right there a good portion of the time, he did not use the 81mm mortars when he could have used them. He asked authority the first day from the 27th Infantry to use them. This request was refused until the location of the Jap and our own troops in the pocket could be determined. Thereafter, he did not press the point as he should have. Mortars were

available near Hill 53 and were eventually used. I am afraid that the battalion commander will have to take the responsibility for failing to use the 81mm mortars on the second day, and thereafter, even though the permission to use them at first had not been granted.

There were a couple of incidents connected with the attack of the 161st Infantry in the second phase of the division's operations that I want to touch upon. You will recall that in the basic plan of the division the 27th Infantry was to make a holding attack, holding the Japs on Hill 27, while the principle effort of the division was to be made by the 161st Infantry from the general line of Hills X, Y and Z to the northwest, not just to Hill 87 but to 87V, that is the rear and southwest corner of Hill 87; the idea being that the 161st Infantry would be able to outflank the Japs from that position and then drive to the north. That plan had to be changed for reasons already given to you. You will recall that I went up to see Colonel McCulloch to press the pursuit of the Japs, via Hills 88, 89 and 90 where we had intended to use the 161st Infantry. On my way back from Hill 89 on January 22nd, at about 1600, I stopped at Hill V to see how the leading battalion of the 161st Infantry, which was still to cross from X to V, was coming along. I saw nothing of the battalion, so I left word with "I" Company of the 27th Infantry to give them an area to bivouac for the night. I proceeded toward the "Snake" to the rear and, at Hill K, I ran into the leading companies of the 161st Infantry which had started out from Hill X to Hill V. I asked a company commander why he came into K instead of V. He answered that they had found a Jap trail and followed the trail to Hill K. He stated that the going was so tough that when they found this trail they followed it and it brought them to Hill K instead of V. Fortunately, this change of direction played no part in the success or failure of the operation, but it might have been a very serious proposition and that is why I am mentioning it here. Somewhere along the line someone had failed to get orders down to the battalion commander and the leading companies of that battalion that the regiment was to attack to the northwest to Hill V with the mission of catching the Japs on Hill 87 from the rear. Somewhere along the line, either the division or the regiment failed to emphasize that the maneuvering force must not cut in too soon. Had the Japs held Hill 87 in force, the attack of the leading battalion of the 161st Infantry would simply have been an extension of the frontal attack of the 27th Infantry. An azimuth bearing should have been given to the leading company and that azimuth bearing should have been followed no matter how tough the trail was. When the going gets tough we simply have got to overcome the toughness. I had personally made an aerial reconnaissance of the area and knew the difficulties involved. I showed the regimental commander excellent stereoscopic slides of the area. We traced out together the route which was to be taken. But for some reason it was not taken. Let's not have that happen again.

There is one final point that I want to mention now that our discussions of the tactical operations of the three infantry regiments have been completed. While framing of the orders for our first attack, one of the things that we had to put down was the location of a straggler line. I want to say we never needed a straggler line. That is a

remarkable tribute to our men. There simply wasn't a sign of malingering, thank God. However there was one danger which we did run into, to which all new troops are subject no matter how good they are: That is the danger of panic. During the operations of the division there were two instances of near panic. This is a disagreeable subject but we might as well be frank and admit that we are all human, all subject to fear, and under certain conditions, susceptible to panic. On one occasion panic was avoided by two or three NCO's who, thank goodness, did their job. The men who broke were in front of certain machine-gun positions controlled by these Non-coms. As the men ran back through the area, the NCO's grabbed them off and placed them in the gun positions in the rear with orders to stay in these positions. It worked. The panic stopped and the Japs did not get through. That is one of the ways of doing it. Someone along the line has to keep his head cool and when he sees men about to break, quiet them down and give them a job to do. If you will only give them something to do, it will usually work. The other thing is to stop them from talking, if you can. Fortunately I came along just at the right moment, in the second instance, where a unit was withdrawing in a near panic. This unit had faced a very tough job in thick jungle, had been somewhat cut by the Japs and had broken after having lost a number of its officers. One man was hollering "it's suicide!" "It's suicide to go down there!" If necessary I would have knocked him down, because somebody had to stop him. The rest of the men would soon have caught his hysteria. That unit later went back into the area from whence it came and redeemed itself in fine style. Fortunately these incidents were extremely rare in our operations. Our men have been tried with fire and have made good. But we will receive new replacements before we go into action again, and must have in mind that under certain conditions men will break and we must be prepared to stop it before it becomes serious. New men, the first time in action, may go into a sudden panic when something goes wrong. Let's face this possibility and be ready to handle such situations as was done so well by those NCO's.

## CHAPTER VI

### ARTILLERY OPERATIONS

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#### SECTION I

##### OUTLINE AND PLANS OF OPERATIONS OF THE 25TH DIVISION ARTILLERY

Brig. Gen. STANLEY E. REINHART, U.S. Army, Commanding.

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151. PLANS AND OPERATIONS.--Full advantage was taken of the opportunity afforded the Division Artillery for ground and map reconnaissance; consequently on January 4th we were ready to make definite recommendations as to missions and positions to the Division Commander. Detailed reconnaissances and selection of positions by battalions and batteries were made on the 5th.

a. The following areas were approved and sufficiently occupied and organized to permit registrations on the 8th, which was the only time requirement set by the Division Artillery. The 64th Field Artillery, in direct support of the 35th Infantry took positions on the hill area in the vicinity of Hills 34, 37, and 40. They had good close-in observation on a knob just to the west of Wright Road, the road into their area. The 35th Infantry CP was conveniently close, just across Wright Road, which proved to be a valuable advantage. The 8th Field Artillery, with its mission of direct support of the 27th Infantry, went into position on the three fingers of hill mass 60, 61, and 62. The occupation of this position required a great deal of road construction, and only by willing and ready cooperation, and hard work by the engineers, assisted by the 8th Field Artillery, was this road opened in time for accomplishment of the registration mission. Close-in observation was available on Hill 49. The 89th Field Artillery was given the area of the ridge along Hill 69, with a general support mission due to the fact that the 161st Infantry was in reserve. This battalion was not assigned to direct support of either the 8th or 64th Field Artillery Battalions, because the information of the enemy did not indicate a probable greater need for artillery in either infantry

regimental sector, nor was it given a secondary mission of reinforcing the fire of either direct support battalion. This permitted greater flexibility of central control of the mass of the artillery fire. This was undoubtedly the best position area of all. It contained most of the essentials of a good artillery position, but even here considerable difficulty was experienced in getting guns into the area; winching guns down steep slopes had to be resorted to in all cases. The 90th Field Artillery, with the mission of general support took a position formerly occupied by a Marine 75mm Pack Battalion, off Wright Road and just north of the junction with the Beach Road. Needless to say, it was difficult to fit a 155mm Battalion into an area that barely accommodated a 75mm Howitzer Battalion. Choice of this position was influenced by the desirability of having it close to the Beach Road ammunition dump.

b. The corps order had attached the 2nd Battalion of the 10th Marines, 75mm Howitzers, to this division. This battalion was given the mission of general support, and in addition, on account of its light projectile, was given the secondary mission of reinforcing the 8th Field Artillery on call, the 8th Field Artillery having more open terrain in its zone. Also the corps order gave the Americal Division Artillery the mission of reinforcing the 25th Division Artillery fire with one medium and two light battalions. Conference with the Commanding General of that Artillery developed that he was ready to use all of his command when needed. This reinforcement was used, particularly that from the 221st Field Artillery Battalion, the medium battalion. It was used throughout the battle, and to all intents and purposes used as one of the 25th Division Medium Battalions. It did fine work in every respect; its fire was speedy and always accurate. Acknowledgment is made to General Woodward and the 221st for their generous and valuable support.

152. SELECTION OF GUN POSITIONS.---The first consideration in the selection of all gun positions, in addition to being able to accomplish the assigned mission, was accessibility of the areas. Selection was restricted by the existing road net: Wright Road was the only axis of approach and supply. In every case, considerable bull-dozing and a great deal of pick and shovel and pioneer work was necessary to get the guns in position. This main axis was later augmented by continuing a branch of the Tyler Road through the 89th Field Artillery area to the Wright Road, which provided a complete circuit for traffic into that position. Also a road connecting Wright Road with a continuation of the Marine Trail opened up an alternate route to the 8th and 64th Field Artillery Battalions. This road greatly shortened communication and travel by the 8th Field Artillery to their supported unit. The selection of these positions was such that all battalions could reach Kokumbona without displacement.

153. OPERATIONS.---a. At the beginning of the 2nd phase of the battle, when the 161st Infantry was committed, the 89th Field Artillery from its original positions, was placed in direct support of it. On account of the probability of light direct support missions the 89th Field Artillery had the secondary mission of being liable for



general support missions. The change in the Division plan, on January 22nd, to proceed on beyond Kokumbona, necessitated immediate displacement of part of the artillery to positions on Hill 66, in order to gain additional range for supporting the 27th Infantry, the leading element of the Division. During this displacement the 64th Field Artillery took over the missions of the 8th Field Artillery, but under the control of the forward observers and liaison officers of the 8th Field Artillery. The fire on Hills 90A, 90, and 91 took place in this way. Notice during this displacement the maneuverability and flexibility of fire of the 64th Field Artillery. During the night of the 22nd and 23rd, the 90th Field Artillery was moved to a position, on the dependable Beach Road, from the mouth of the Matanikau River west to Point Cruz. During this time the 89th took over all general support missions. On the 23rd, after the 90th Field Artillery had completed registration and was ready for general support missions, the 89th Field Artillery was moved to an area on hill mass north of Hill 49, the 64th taking over its missions. This leap frogging of three (3) battalions was completed over a period of approximately thirty-six (36) hours without any interruption of communications or of continuous artillery support.

b. The 64th Field Artillery, remained in its same location during the entire action rendering support to the 35th Infantry and assisting in cleaning out the GIPU strong point. From their last positions the 8th, 89th, and 90th Field Artillery Battalions could all have supported the action of the 27th Infantry to a point about 4,000 yards beyond the Poha River.

c. None of these positions were ideal. In fact, many of them would have been suicidal in face of enemy counter-battery artillery or air superiority. As has already been pointed out there was rarely any concealment from air observation. For a short time the 8th and 64th Field Artillery actually comprised the front lines until the 182nd swung across to Hill 42 and covered the front which was completely exposed to the enemy. Chances were taken with full knowledge of the enemies capabilities. Consequently under the particular conditions all of these actions were warranted and justified.

d. All during the occupation of the original positions and after displacement was completed to new positions, continual registrations were conducted on points easily identified on the ground which complemented previous survey and kept the artillery continuously prepared for possible later fires.

e. Supporting action, outside of registrations, harassing and interdiction missions, really ended when the 6th Marines passed through the 27th Infantry on January 27th. The Division Artillery was called on for a few fires to reinforce the 6th Marines Artillery. Also, a few targets of opportunity were engaged during this period. The final move to the present defensive positions was well executed and, incidentally, these positions were well concealed from air observation and the principles of camouflage were stressed.

f. Briefly stated, that is the story of the Division Artillery, but it by no means tells the story of the hard work involved. If it had not been for the superb state of training of all personnel and the well rounded experience gained through various training phases on Oahu, which made organizations out of aggregations and which cemented the command, and organizations, and staffs together, the task would have been nigh impossible.

## SECTION II

### DETAILED OPERATIONS

Brig. Gen. STANLEY E. REINHART, U.S. Army.

154. INTRODUCTION.--a. The first mission was the 100 gun preparation on the "Water Hole", or "Devil's Den" area, on the morning of the 10th. This preparation which sent 92 tons of ammunition into the strongly held enemy position, was intensely terrific and came down with sudden surprise. Here was used for the first time a method of firing a preparation which was believed would keep the enemy guessing, cause him more casualties, and make it impossible for him to know when the preparation was over and friendly infantry could be expected to move forward in the attack. Instead of firing continuously, the fire was delivered in short heavy bursts. Where more than one battalion participated this effect was obtained by firing on a time schedule. When such a schedule was used units were instructed to subtract their time of flight from the given time to get the time their lanyards were to be pulled, this in an effort to have the first rounds arrive simultaneously. The intervals of silence were to make the enemy believe that the bombardment was over and that he could safely leave his cover. He was then surprised by another burst, until we hoped that when the firing was actually over he would be inclined to stay right in his hole rather than to man his position in readiness to repel the attack. However such ploys are of little value if the infantry does not follow up the artillery fire closely. That they should do so was well learned by effective assault troops in the last war and it should not have to be learned again in this one. The infantry should be on top of the enemy's first positions as the artillery fire ceases. To not do so gives the enemy a chance to man his defensive positions, make adjustments for casualties and, generally, be well prepared to resist. Much of the effect of the artillery fire was lost, and so lost repeatedly during these operations. This first preparation sounded like all hell had broken-loose; the enemy must have been sure of it. It was a fitting curtain raising performance for the opening of the victorious Division offensive which ensued. In order to gain initial surprise with a well placed volume of timely fire, no registration or adjustment was permitted immediately prior to this preparation. Data had to be accurate with all corrections applied prior to opening fire.

b. It might be interesting to note that at the time of the arrival of the 25th Division there was no adequate horizontal or vertical control available. The 104 map was useless and the uncontrolled mosaic was not sufficiently accurate. The Marine Artillery admitted, of their own free will and accord, that they had been shooting as one of their battalion commanders expressed it, "by marbles and a ouija board", and that they had just made a momentous discovery that would revolutionize artillery firing, namely horizontal and vertical control. The survey and the one mosaic which the Division Artillery matched, established control on, and gridded to scale, was the first attempt at an unobserved fire chart to be used on Guadalcanal. The lack of sufficient air photos of the proper sort, for information and identification purposes, was a definite handicap which was only remedied by the highest type of individual ingenuity.

### SECTION III

#### ARTILLERY SURVEY FOR GUADALCANAL OPERATIONS

Lt. Col. ROBERT C. GILDART and Maj. DEAN M. BENSON

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155. SURVEY.--a. The ideal solution for artillery fire control is obtained when an accurate 1/20,000 map with military grid is available. Then it is only necessary to locate the actual terrain positions of the guns on the map and direction and range to any target can be measured directly from the map. But there were no controlled maps of GUADALCANAL. Actual distances on the ground (or uncontrolled map or uncontrolled mosaics) was not truly consistently represented. Thus it was necessary to build up a ground survey control. The Marines and Americal Division Artillery had agreed on an arbitrary basis for survey. It was sound and to the advantage of the Division Artillery to use the same ground control plan. A point on the ground at the southwest corner of the Bomber Strip was assigned the arbitrary coordinates (80.0-200.0) - from this point, the line along the south edge of the Bomber Strip was determined to be the Y azimuth  $68^{\circ}11'$  using a magnetic compass declination of  $8^{\circ}30'$  obtained from the Naval Charts of this area. Using this arbitrary basis, the survey proceeded westward. The Americal Division Artillery traversed along the beach, the 25th Division Artillery farther inland; triangulation located the prominent hills south of the beach. This type of survey was performed by transit, measuring angles to the nearest 20 seconds, and computing by logarithm tables. Points were established on the ground near the anticipated position areas. From these points the battalion survey sections could locate their batteries. Points were located up forward, Hills 31, OP 15, OP 17 and others. From these points, using any two for a base, angles were measured to prominent terrain features in the target area thus locating such points as: The head of the "Horse", Hill 52, the much-shot-at lone tree on Hill 87, and others. Vertical control was carried along with horizontal control. All points were plotted on grid sheets.

b. With the described skeleton control it was possible to use photos to assist in shifting fires. Since Americal and Marine Artillery were using the same basis for survey, they could assist with fire on targets designated by coordinates from mutual firing charts.

156. FIRE DIRECTION.--In discussing fire direction it is always necessary to consider it with its components: communication, survey and firing charts. In this operation each battalion used approved methods as a guide for its communications. Direct and sometimes simplexed lines existed from the fire direction center to the firing batteries. The liaison and forward observer lines were connected into

switchboards. Each battalion had some form of radio, inadequate as it was, to employ when wire lines went out. The least useful radio was the SCR 194 while the most useful was the SCR 511 used in conjunction with the SCR 284. All of the radio equipment left much to be desired. Firing charts were constructed principally from survey and observed fires. The Division Artillery Fire Direction Center probably approached, in the matter of firing charts the approved solution more nearly than did the battalions. In addition to the survey data as to gun positions, observation posts and check points, the Division Artillery had only one uncontrolled mosaic which, when compared with the survey in the division sector, turned out to be approximately 1/20,000. Outside this sector, however, the scale varied. This mosaic seemed throughout the operation to give excellent horizontal control for observed fires provided no shift over 1000 yards was made from a registered check point. For vertical control, an oblique was furnished from which interpolations could be made from known points. Again, the nets used by the Division Artillery Fire Control Center was composed of a base set at Division Artillery and one set each of two battalions and air-ground net was maintained. It might be interesting to note at this point, that in maintaining the three hundred and thirty miles of wire laid by the artillery, approximately 2,925 man hours labor and repair of lines was caused solely by the negligence of friendly troops. Thus, it can be seen that radio was relied upon considerably.

## SECTION IV

### FIRE DIRECTION

Lt. Col. ROBERT C. GILDART

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157. DESIGNATION AND DESCRIPTION OF TARGET.--a. Aside from the preparation of data for unobserved fires, there were other points of interest which arose during combat. Point number one was the necessity for a proper designation and description of the target. There are over 100 different ways in which artillery can be fired, depending on the ammunition available, the type of target, its cover and where it is in relation to our own troops. At times the artillery battalion commanders were not given this information. In lieu thereof they were told exactly how much artillery was wanted on a given point. The Air Corps is not told what size bombs nor how many planes to use on a target the bombing of which has been requested by ground troops. The infantry regiment does not receive orders as to how its companies should be employed. Similarly then, the artillery should be given its mission only and allowed to solve it by use of the best material and information available.

b. On one particular instance around Hill 53, the artillery was asked to shift one battalion, the 90th, from an unobserved division concentration to a point very close to front line troops. Now, the area covered by four battalions all firing at the adjusted coordinates of one battalion can be expected by experience to cover an area 400 x 400 yards. It is impossible to tell just where each battalion is firing; therefore, in order to shift to another target from such a concentration with just one battalion it is wise to place the fire at a safe distance in front of friendly troops and gradually creep back to the desired target. Here again, had the artillery merely been given the target, a proper solution could have been obtained quickly. As it was, much discussion preceeded the delivery of fire.

c. There were two other points of interest which bear mentioning at this point. One was the fact that the artillery tried continually, by airplane registration, to keep ahead of the infantry with adjustments so that it could place fairly accurate, harassing fire on the enemy by use of the 1/20,000 mosaic and so also that as observers approached these check points they could shift their fire therefrom. Lastly, the radio intelligence platoon had tied into our survey and when it gave the artillery coordinates of a Japanese station the artillery was able to adjust its fire on these coordinates. This adjustment was accomplished by combining the observation of two observers in what amounted to a set-up quite similar to that used by the Coast Artillery in firing on moving ships.

150. LESSONS LEARNED.--a. From all the operations many definite lessons were learned. The first from Division Artillery standpoint is very important. In order to mass the fires of the Division Artillery accurately when based on the adjustments of one battery in only one battalion, it is absolutely necessary in this rugged terrain for forward observers to give, in addition to their range and deflection sensing, one for the altitude. This sensing may be obtained by using the mil relation and applying the result to a point of known altitude. It may be determined by interpolating between two known points or it may as a last resort be estimated using any terrain feature such as trees which might add greater accuracy to the estimation. In other words, altitude sensings in this operation were possible and would have been profitable but were not in all cases given.

b. Lesson number two is one of which is applicable whenever there is no Corps Artillery for counter-battery fire. Namely, the CP's of the medium general support battalion must be so situated and their personnel so indoctrinated that they immediately, on their own initiative, take under fire all enemy artillery. This should be one of their prime missions.

c. Prior to combat the artillery had had little opportunity to conduct training in high angle fire. Combat soon proved that the training in this respect had been negligent for it was discovered that high angle fire is necessary in this terrain. True, it takes longer to deliver, but because of the greater angle of impact there is far less chance of obtaining shorts on overhanging crests occupied by friendly troops. It was further learned that for best effect where surprise is not necessary and when firing charts are insufficient it is far better for time to be allowed for adjustment on the target area than to attempt a transfer from a known point. Transfers do work in many cases but for all around insurance where time and secrecy are not important, adjust first.

d. One very important lesson in fighting the Japanese in this type of warfare is that they habitually make their camp sites along stream beds. Therefore, much more harassing fires should be concentrated on these particular terrain features.

e. Our last lesson worth mentioning deals with liaison and forward observers. These officers have a great responsibility and they must be more aggressive in suggesting the use of artillery at the proper time. Similarly when a forward observer recognizes a request for artillery as an improper one he must state that fact. Infantry commanders on the other hand must be ready and willing to listen to these officers and make full use of the artillery advice so offered regardless of the fact that in most cases forward observers will be by far the junior officer. Lastly, the T/O for a light battalion should include the necessary personnel and equipment to form three liaison sections rather than two. In many cases four are actually needed, one to the regimental CP and one to each of the three battalions.

f. In addition to the element of time, terrain and the enemy situation, the element of surprise is always paramount. Unobserved massed fire without any previous shooting-in or registration is the acme of accomplishment for surprise as far as artillery is concerned. This can be done with a high degree of accuracy and effect when the proper means and time are available. The two examples of such; unadjusted, surprise massed fires, previously referred to, certainly paid dividends. There is no doubt but that massed artillery fire is the most effective means of neutralizing the jungle pockets, or any other area, to the point where our infantry can go in for the kill without undue losses if they do it promptly. The massing of field artillery fire was a major factor in the speedy and complete overwhelming of the enemy in this operation.



## SECTION V

### S-4 OPERATIONS

Captain GILBERT G. ACKROYD

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159. INITIAL AMMUNITION SUPPLY PROBLEM.--The division ordnance officer brought 10 units of fire for all weapons from Oahu. Upon arrival here, this ammunition was taken by corps and stored in the Tenuu Ammunition Dump. This dump had already a supply of 6 units of fire for other organizations already on the island, making a total of about 8 units for everyone. Loading ammunition presented much difficulty, the roads leading to the dump being almost impassable in rainy weather and the shells being widely dispersed in small piles over a large area of wet marshy ground. 105mm ammunition had been badly mauled, the result, no doubt, of successive loading and unloading by uninstructed personnel. In many instances cartridge cases had been so badly bent that they had to be straightened out at the battery positions before they would fit into the chambers of the guns. Due to lack of transportation no forward dumps had been established until the attack was almost underway thus making it necessary for the battalions to haul their initial 2 units of fire from the Tenuu Dump to positions west of Wright Road between January 5th when the positions had been selected, and January 10th, when the initial push was to be made.

160. INITIAL TRANSPORTATION PROBLEM.--Two units of fire for each 105mm battalion weigh 135 tons and required 54 2½-ton truck loads. Two units of fire for the 155mm battalion weigh 186 tons and call for about 54 four ton truck loads. To accomplish this task each light battalion had 5 regularly assigned 2½-ton trucks, its T/BA being 46 such trucks. The medium battalion had 10 four ton trucks available, its T/BA being 31 2½-ton and 16 four ton trucks. These vehicles had to be used additionally as prime movers and for the daily administrative details of the battalions, each having only 5 ½-ton trucks, 2 weapons carriers, and 4 one ton trailers. Also, the medium battalion and two of the light battalions were not as yet completely unloaded from the transports. This transportation being obviously insufficient, the major part of ammunition hauling had to be accomplished during those intervals when other vehicles could be released from beach unloading details, that is, at night under blackout conditions and over a bad and comparatively strange road net. It was fortunate indeed that by nightfall of the 5th of January, when the first convoy went through, the new road net past Fighter Field 2 was sufficiently completed to allow by-passing the old postoffice road.

For this night hauling an additional six 2½-ton trucks per light battalion were made available by the division motor officer. In addition to these difficulties, roads had not yet been pushed into the position areas and, merely as an example of what other battalions had to do to a lesser extent, the 8th Battalion had to unload the greater part of its ammunition in the vicinity of Windmill Hill and reload and haul it to its position as the opportunity presented itself. Nevertheless, all battalions were in position with approximately two units of fire in time for registration on January 8th and 9th. The accomplishment of this task was certainly a tribute to the efficiency of the personnel of the various battalions, and particularly of their service batteries.

161. SUBSEQUENT AMMUNITION SUPPLY AND TRANSPORTATION PROBLEM.---a.

By January 10th the division ordnance officer had established a forward dump at the corner of Wright Road containing two units of fire of 105mm ammunition, part of which had been hauled by trucks from units of the Division Artillery. By using artillery and quartermaster transportation, necessarily taken from other details for the occasion, he was just able to maintain this level, it being often necessary to send the loaded trucks directly to the battalion positions as they arrived from the Tenaru Dump. For example, after firing in direct support of the action of the 27th Infantry on the "Horse" the 8th Battalion was at one time down to ¼ unit of fire. On occasions such as these it became necessary to shift transportation constantly from one battalion to another. Also, throughout the operations, the artillery units were called upon to furnish transportation for beach unloading and other details. If the action had continued at this tempo on several fronts for a more prolonged period, the supply of ammunition would have been broken down due to lack of transportation. During the whole operations there were only two major motor vehicle accidents. In one, a heavily loaded ammunition truck slipped off a wet crowned road, just recently carved out of the crest of a razor-back hill by a bulldozer, and rolled down a steep ravine end over end. The other was a collision caused by brake failure, which failures were not uncommon throughout the whole operation due to the bad practice of unloading details of backing vehicles into salt water over the level of the brakebands.

b. After the fall of Kokumbona on January 23rd, the situation was greatly relieved due to the general slowing down of operations and the receipt of additional transportation.

162. AMMUNITION STORAGE.---Due to the nature of the terrain, swampy in the lowlands and rocky on the slopes, ammunition storage in a relatively hasty occupation of positions presented a difficult problem. It is submitted that this situation may have resulted in the reported inaccuracy in range of white phosphorous smoke shells. Its chemical content becomes liquid at 112 degrees and if exposed to such heat while stored horizontally it may, due to change in temperature, again become a solid along the bottom of the length of the shell, causing the shell to become unstable in flight. Possibly this could be cured

by storing such shells vertically in a relatively cool place immediately after exposure to a temperature of 112 degrees. Such is the conclusion, at least of the division chemical officer.

163. GENERAL DATA ON AMMUNITION HAULED AND FIRED.---a. During the whole operation all units of this command hauled a total of 53,344 rounds of ammunition, weighing 3,177,965 pounds or approximately 1588 tons. These figures are exclusive of ammunition hauled by ordnance to the Wright Road and Matanikau Dumps in division artillery vehicles. This amounts to approximately 578 truck loads, but for reasons easily understood, the actual number of loads hauled was somewhat less due to the tendency to overload which was checked as soon as discovered. In the long run overloading on roads such as encountered in this operation will prove disastrous because of the resulting mechanical breakdown and the loss of time and damage caused by slipping and skidding incidental to a poorly distributed weight load.

b. During the whole operation all units of this command fired a total of 32,232 rounds of high explosive, weighing 1,374,707 pounds or 687 tons, the equivalent, incidentally, of 2750 five hundred pound aerial bombs. Of this total 5148 rounds were 155mm weighing 489,060 pounds or 244½ tons, and 657 rounds were 105mm time shells. In addition 1499 rounds of smoke shell was expended, making a total expenditure of nearly 3½ units of fire. These figures do not include rounds fired by reinforcing units of the Americal Division and the Marines.

c. Ammunition expended on particular missions by units of this command and reinforcing units of the Americal Division and the Marines.

(1) Total number of rounds expended on preparation of 10 January. 105's-3308, 155's-518, 75's-1874. Total 184,742 pounds or 92½ tons.

(2) Total number of rounds expended on preparation of 22 January. 105's-3106, 155's-423. Total 141,751 pounds or 71 tons.

(3) Total number of rounds expended on preparation of Poha River. 105's-627, 155's-548. Total 72,563 pounds or 36 tons.

(4) Total number of rounds expended on harassing mission at Kokumbona area and Hills 87, 88 and 89. 105's-709, 155's-40. Total 26,984 pounds or 13½ tons.

(5) Total number of rounds expended in pocket of Hill 27, 31 and 42. 105's-5096, 155's-942, 75's-614. Total 265,094 pounds or 132½ tons.

(6) Total number of rounds expended on Hill 53. 105's-3288, 155's-781. Total 181,713 pounds or 91 tons.

(7) Total number of rounds expended in pocket of Hills 43 and 44. 105's-13. Total 425 pounds.

(8) Total number of rounds expended on Hills X, Y, and Z. 105's-306, 155's-146, 75's-80. Total 25,044 pounds or  $12\frac{1}{2}$  tons.

(9) Total number of rounds expended on Hill 87. 105's-2144, 155's-432. Total 111,149 pounds or  $55\frac{1}{2}$  tons.

(10) Total number of rounds expended south of Hill 52 (above the Matanikau for company patrol of 161st Infantry) 105's-1669, 155's-516. Total 103,596 pounds or 52 tons.

(11) Total number expended south-east of Hill X. 105's 579, 155's-1104, 75's 604. Total 132,632 pounds or 66 tons.

(12) Total number of rounds expended by B Btry 90th FA Bn., from December 24th, 1942 to January 5th, 1943, on call fires from Americal Division. 155's-267. Total 25,365 pounds or  $12\frac{1}{2}$  tons.

(13) Total number of rounds expended by B Btry 90th FA Bn., in support of attack of 132nd Infantry on Hill 27 on December 26, 1942. 155's-415. Total 39,425 pounds or  $19\frac{1}{4}$  tons.

## SECTION VI

### LESSONS LEARNED

Brig. Gen. STANLEY E. REINHART, U.S. Army.

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164. TEAMWORK AND COOPERATION.--a. During our service we have all heard and read a great deal about the infantry-artillery team. Every peace time maneuver has strived to perfect this action, and every critique proved how far we were from attaining the desired state of coordination. This state is seldom obtained until the division enters combat and pays the penalty, in blood, for weakness in this team action.

b. A winning football team must pull together in a unified effort with every member doing his job to the best of his ability, to either assist in gaining yardage on the offense or to prevent the opponent from carrying the ball forward on the defense. Successful cooperation in our Division calls for the same type of team action. The artillery and infantry must act as one force with a common aim. Neither of them can afford to act independent of the other, and neither should aspire to stardom by individual, uncoordinated action. There can be no star players who are grabbing glory at the expense of their teammates.

165. ARTILLERY MUST BE THE TRUE BASE OF FIRE.--This statement holds true for both the offense and defense, just as the line of a football team is the true basis for defensive or offensive action in a football game. In the offense the artillery opens up the holes in the enemy lines so that our infantry can make the maximum gain on the ground with a minimum loss in manpower. Artillery shells are blockers and knock down the enemy tacklers that would otherwise block the infantry advance. In the defense, the artillery can lay down fires that will break up the enemy's plays. In either situation the artillery can maneuver its fires to coordinate with ground action. The infantry carries the ball while the artillery provides the interference. The former calls the plays and the latter acts on his signals, again every member of a football team has to know the plays and understand the signals, just as the artillery must have complete knowledge

of the infantry plans and action in order to render efficient support. With such information, the base of fire can be massed on the proper place at the time desired.

166. TIMING OF INFANTRY MOVEMENTS WITH ARTILLERY FIRE.--The line and backfield of a football team are coordinated to move at the right time in order to gain power. Similar timing is essential if the infantry is to fully exploit the advantages gained through supporting artillery fires. After the enemy interference is knocked down, the infantry must follow quickly before the enemy has time to revive, get up, get his wits about him, and reorganize his defense.

167. LIAISON AND FORWARD OBSERVERS.--a. It was interesting to note that the conclusions of Captain Hatch and Lieutenant Shields were completely divergent on the location and duties of forward observers and liaison officers. Oddly enough, both were right according to their particular situation. Each situation has its own best solution in accordance with requirements and conditions of operation. We must continuously guard against being hide-bound by standard procedures, and tying hands by any restrictions on individual initiative and freedom of action.

b. A forward observer's primary mission is to designate targets, observe and adjust fire, as well as provide intelligence information. He is not tied to any particular infantry unit but is subject to call from any zone-of-action and acts on all requests regardless of the organization. His location is only dictated by the best possible position to accomplish his job - it may be ahead of the infantry, or with the leading elements and, at other times several thousand yards behind; depending on a varied number of conditions. On the other hand the liaison officer is assigned to a definite supported unit. He advises the infantry commander on the employment of artillery in accordance with the particular needs and the artillery capabilities. He keeps his artillery battalion fully informed of both the friendly and enemy dispositions and any changes in the scheme of maneuver. He may call for, observe, and direct fire but he primarily furnishes information which will assist the artillery commander in rendering the proper decision for the correct attack of the target.

c. The necessity for close personal contact of artillery-infantry personnel cannot be over-emphasized. Misunderstanding, misinformation and delays are avoided by this contact and direct acquaintance. Such personnel should think and talk the same language. This friendly, sociable attitude should be continuous. Right now, during the lull, is a good time to get better acquainted and establish good personal relations between all the members of the division combat team: a group of individual teams united together in a fighting division team.

d. Both liaison and forward observers must of necessity be junior officers. They must deal with senior officers of the supported branch. This condition sometimes creates an embarrassing situation if not properly handled by both parties. The individual nature of both

persons must be closely studied and appreciated. Generally, more confidence and assertion on the part of forward observers is necessary; also more consideration of their recommendations on the part of infantry commanders would be a great step toward united action.

166. COMPLETE INFORMATION ON TARGETS.--Sufficient target information was often lacking during the recent campaign, thereby causing delay and considerable uncertainty on the part of the battalion commanders and S-3's. In requesting fires by the infantry, it is essential that every element of information that is available be passed on to the fire direction center. Calling for fires on an indefinite area, on a target of unknown nature makes it practically impossible to render a correct decision for the proper attack of the target. Some of the more important descriptive elements that are essential for quick intelligent action are as follows:

a. Designation of Target: Such as machine guns in the open, dug in pill boxes, infantry approach formation, reserves assembling in a covered area, heavy weapons, mortars, artillery battery firing effectively, et cetera. The artillery must know the urgency for fire and whether the target is stationary or moving, and whether covered or in the open. All of these factors assist in determining the type and quantity of ammunition, the zone to be employed and the density and duration of fire.

b. Location of the Target: This can be done in many ways such as: by coordinates, by reference to an identifiable terrain feature, by approximate photo location, with respect to a check point or previously fired-in concentration, and several other ways. In any case, sufficient information must be available to plot the initial data on the fire chart sufficiently accurately to insure that the first round will fall in the desired area. On the whole, much more information is needed for delivering proper artillery fire than is required for the more simple mortar procedure. In case of doubt, give the artillery the whole picture in any terms or language and its fire direction will do the rest.

167. DOUBTFUL TARGET AREAS.--It is often desirable to deliver fires on areas of a doubtful nature such as; possible enemy approaches, corridors for attack, assembly areas and the like. In this case, the size of the area, its location and probable use, are essential information needed for rendering neutralizing area fires.

170. AMMUNITION REQUIREMENTS.--There were frequent requests for the fires of the entire division artillery in one regimental zone. By granting all such requests an enormous amount of ammunition was wasted. Due to possible ammunition shortages for various reasons, the final decision on the number of battalions employed, and the amount of ammunition to be expended on each mission, must be centralized to the responsible artillery commander. The artillery commanders are the only ones who have sufficient information on the ammunition situation to decide on the amount of expenditure for any particular shot.

171. RESTRICTING THE USE OF ARTILLERY.--In some instances, a blanket order was issued by the infantry regiments prohibiting artillery fire in their zones-of-action for a definite period of time. Such restrictions resulted in the complete loss of artillery support on targets of opportunity that presented themselves in these areas during the stated time. This procedure rendered the artillery completely useless and nullified the desire to assist. A better procedure would be to give the artillery complete information on the situation and keep it posted on up-to-the-minute changes. Then the onus of responsibility of action is properly placed.

172. PRIORITY OF ESTABLISHMENTS.--A word on the need for priority of location of artillery position areas over the rear echelon establishments or even CP's. The artillery has a definite tactical mission to accomplish. Its positions must conform to the requirements of this mission. The proximity of hospitals, CP's and other installations must not interfere with normal night harassing, interdiction, registration and other fire missions based on established G-2 and observed information. The artillery is often asked, "Who in hell are you harassing, us or the enemy?" The answer is definitely the enemy. A good soldier must learn to rest in spite of any disturbing booms.

173. ARTILLERY FIRING SHORT.--a. Now for a few remarks on the subject of the frantic calls and nervous signals set-up on "Friendly Artillery Falling Short." In this discussion I'm not claiming infallibility or making any personal criticism - I merely desire to correct a situation that became alarming and interfered seriously with our efficient functioning. There was an enormous amount of time and effect wasted due to the numerous "CEASE FIRINGS" coming into the fire direction centers. Promiscuous calling in into any fire direction center merely adds to confusion and interferes with operations. Just imagine a busy, highly concentrated fire direction center where phones are practically jumping up and down receiving and disseminating normal data, being continually interrupted by everybody and his brother with reports of fire falling short - it results in positive interference and seldom assists in getting quickly the desired corrective action. I think you now can see the need for handling such reports, in accordance with normal, standard command procedure. The responsibility for corrective action is then centralized.

b. At the beginning of this operation we were well aware of the natural reaction of front line troops who were about to receive their first baptism of fire. Our officers were warned on the fact that they would undoubtedly hear the cry of "Fire Falling Short." Until the supported units got used to the swish!, and the bang!, fire that landed at least 200 yards in front would almost invariably be reported as short. It happened in the last war, it will happen in this war, and will continue until wars cease, so I guess it is normal.

c. We took all the due precautions to prevent any unnecessary alarm. We started adjustments well forward. We registered on points at a safe distance from our own troops - we even registered individual guns prior to massing fires. But even with all of these common sense procedures we could'nt lick old man "Probable Error."



d. A dispersion chart should give you a very clear idea of the pattern that would be formed on the ground by 100 rounds of 105mm shot at the same elevation setting for charge V at a range of 6000 yards. You will note that target shots are rare and that rounds may fall as far as 140 yards short or over the target. There is nothing that we can do to improve on this proven pattern.

e. In spite of this normal dispersion fire was placed within 100 yards of our own troops, even up to 50 yards near Hill 27, without any casualties to our own troops. It is estimated that about one tenth of one percent of our rounds fall into friendly areas, and probably caused about one half of one percent of the total of casualties. Seasoned front line troops might well expect a higher percentage and will be willing to pay the price for the unquestioned value of close-in artillery support.

f. A final word on reports of friendly artillery falling short. Many of them were proven false and found due to Jap mortars and artillery opening up at the psychological moment. This was a smart trick which caused confusion and resulted in distress signals for us to lift our fire. During the first preparation on the morning of the 10th, green rockets were sent up almost immediately. Had we acted on these nervous signals our first preparation would have been quite ineffective.

174. PROTECTION AGAINST ENEMY ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENT.---a. When I remember men standing up in groups to watch the show I shudder at the thought of what would have happened if the enemy had been able to lay down counter-offensive artillery preparations prior to any of our jump-offs. We were indeed fortunate. After having seen the devastating effects of our own artillery we should have a full appreciation of what could have happened under different circumstances where the advantages were reversed or at least equal. In more ways than one, we operated under ideal conditions and consequently exposed ourselves unnecessarily to the point of establishing bad habits, which if persisted in in further operations will cause a lot of casualties. The whole operation gave the appearance of a lot of people scrambling for grandstand seats to watch the big show. This condition must be reversed to the point that nobody is seen by the enemy and that nobody does anything to disclose the position of himself, his buddy, or his outfit. The infantry must learn to take cover during friendly artillery fire or can expect a higher percentage of casualties. Remember the flying fragments of a friendly shell are just as deadly as those of the enemy, so get down and stay down until our artillery is lifted. Bunching and crowding together in all areas was particular noticeable; dispersion and concealment were the exception rather than the rule. Such congestion and grouping would have been the answer to an artilleryman's prayer as targets of opportunity. It was only by the grace of God, and the inability of the enemy to mass artillery fires, that our casualties from such neglect of fundamentals were as small as they were. We must get in the fox-hole and slit-trench habit. Hit them quickly and stay there during artillery or air bombardment. This is now S.O.P. and can't be over-emphasized.

b. On Hill 43 a Japanese prisoner made the remark that their officers had taught them how to protect themselves against infantry fire, but had not taught them what to do about artillery fire. You will recall that on many occasions the Japs actually ran, and came out in the open to get away from the artillery pounding; consequently, they made easy targets for our infantry as well as exposing themselves to shell fragmentations. Our men must avoid this, must be taught the simple lessons of protection in order to avoid unnecessary casualties.

c. In this regard I want to say a word about the advantages of the slit trench over covered dugouts. During this operation many dugouts covered with logs and sand bags were observed. In my opinion, such constructions merely provide a false sense of security and are actually dangerous, rather than giving the protection sought. I will grant that a direct hit is improbable, but I claim that the concussion of a shell with a delay fuze will cause this type of shelter to crumble and fall in on the occupants. It constitutes a self made trap which will extract its toll where heavy enemy artillery or air bombing is encountered.

175. CONCLUSION.--a. From the admissions contained in the interrogations of Japanese prisoners it was generally conceded that the effect of the constant pounding by our artillery contributed greatly in breaking the enemy resistance. No doubt it was a far more terrific concentration of artillery fire than any they had encountered in all their previous campaigns. There is no doubt that this mass of fire contributed greatly in demoralizing enemy effort, breaking resistance, and disrupting counter-attacks. Such fire threw confusion into the enemies ranks and caused numerous casualties.

b. From remarks of our infantry soldiers and officers, our fire was a great morale factor to our own troops and aided greatly in the advance of the supported unit. We are indeed grateful for remarks such as those voiced by infantry speakers during this critique. Personally, I believe that, due to our extraordinary opportunities for experience and seasoning, in acquiring sound combat efficiency, that the artillery in this Division is the best in the United States Army--this is a factual statement and not bragging, for it is based on a knowledge of our training and that of our new divisions. But, after this experience, we know it is going to be better.

c. We by no means claim infallibility or perfection - there is no such thing in human endeavor. There is always room for improvement and progress. Some of our junior officers are still not thoroughly trained and need more experience and knowledge in order to establish more firmly their sureness and confidence in action. We are now following a program of individual training and have plans for battery, battalion and division artillery exercises prior to combat team practice. These problems will be unpinned from a constructively critical viewpoint and we expect to profit by, and put into practice, the lessons learned in this campaign.

d. In closing I wish to commend the performance of the Artillery in all ranks and grades with a special word of tribute to our old experienced N.C.O.'s. The stalwart performance of our liaison and forward observer parties is also especially worthy of note. I also wish to express the extreme pleasure we experienced in supporting such splendid infantry as comprises the "Queen of Battles" in this Division. Just remember that we are the "King Pin" of your support and can be counted on to deliver the goods.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE OPERATIONS OF DIVISIONAL SERVICES JANUARY 5 - 26, 1943

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#### SECTION I

##### OPERATIONS OF THE 65TH ENGINEER BATTALION

Major George F. Dickson, Corps of Engineers

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176. PERIOD OF PREPARATION.--The battalion landed in two echelons -- the first, "E&S" Company and "C" Company, on the 17th of December, 1942. The second echelon including "A" and "B" Companies arrived on the 30th of December. As with the rest of the division, the first few days on Red Beach were spent in normal reorganization and preparation. On December 23rd, the division commander anticipating the forthcoming action, directed the division engineer to reconnoiter for a supply route from the defense perimeter to the high ground north of Mt. Austen for the division's action in that sector. Such a route would avoid the use of the congested main road which was in poor shape. An aerial reconnaissance was made of the area and was followed by detailed ground reconnaissance in conjunction with infantry patrols. As a result of these reconnaissances the route from the partially constructed upper Lunga Bridge up Hill 562 was chosen. "C" Company from bivouac near this bridge, worked toward the completion of the bridge and pushed the road up to Hill 562. On January 1st, due to a change in the situation, this work was discontinued.

177. FIRST PHASE, (JANUARY 2ND to 20TH).--a. On the 2nd of January, the division commander gave the division engineer the warning order for the attack on the 10th and directed that the artillery cut-off from Wright Road south of Windmill Hill to the existing road from the Matanikau to Hill 65 be constructed. This road when completed would allow the artillery to get into position and would provide a complete

loop for traffic. "C" Company working from both ends of this road and at the same time building Terrell Bridge - a trestle bridge of 70' span -- completed the loop in time for the attack on the 10th. During the action "C" Company then pushed the road from west of Terrell Bridge out the ridge held by the 182nd Infantry, down the valley towards the Matanikau in an effort to tie in with the tail of the "Sea Horse" so as to afford a supply route for the 35th Infantry. Because the water route down the Matanikau proved so successful, and due also to the improved tactical situation, this project was dropped before completion.

b. "A" Company during this same period, was engaged in the construction of the road from Wright Road to the water point at Jones' Spring. This spring had been discovered on an early reconnaissance and proved very effective in supplying water to the troops in the vicinity of Mt. Austen. "A" Company on completion of this road, and operating from bivouac with "H&S" Company on Dead Cow Ridge, then took over the maintenance of Wright Road and the construction of a jeep road from the head of Wright Road to Hill 27.

c. "B" Company, operating from bivouac east of the Matanikau, aided the 57th Engineers in the construction of the Matanikau Loop which involved much time and effort - consuming "corduroying." This company also worked on the construction of the road up the hind leg of the "Galloping Horse" towards Hill 52. In addition, it assisted the 27th Infantry in the construction of a cableway from Hill 66 to the forelegs of the "Horse" and the cableways on the "Sea Horse." By clearing the Matanikau River bed of boulders and logs and by deepening the river bed in places this company made the Matanikau water route to the Sea Horse possible.

178. SECOND PHASE (JANUARY 20th to 26TH).--a. In preparation for the second phase of the operation, the division engineer was again given timely warning of the engineer requirements of the operation. The division engineer was directed to reconnoiter for a possible route to the west to supply the forces in the drive toward Hill 87. At this time there was a Marine Road from the Kangaroo to Hill 66. This was not considered at first since it was overburdened with marine traffic. Studies of stereo pairs of the area were made as a preliminary to the ground reconnaissance. It looked as though a route up the West Fork of the Matanikau might be the solution and a reconnaissance through this Japanese infested area was made. The reconnaissance showed that the precipitous sides of the valley made such a road impractical. The next day further reconnaissance in advance of the marine positions was made out toward the "Snake." The patrol got through and brought back the information which was the greatest piece of engineering luck in the entire operation. The wooded area between the mouth of the Snake and the head of the Kangaroo was not, as it appeared on the aerial photo, the continuation of the deep valley of the west fork of the Matanikau but was instead a natural divide -- an almost level fill requiring little effort to put the road through. Due to this, it was

decided that the division would use the Marine Road up Hill 66 and that the 65th Engineers would make an all out effort to improve this road and push the road behind the advancing infantry out to Hill 87. On the 20th January, "A" Company, followed the next day by "C" Company, moved out to Hill 66 and from the location improved the road up Hill 66 and pushed the road out to the "Snake" and kept going as the infantry advanced, finally reaching the foot of Hill 89 on January 25. "B" Company during this period continued work on the Matanikau loop and pushed the road up the "Galloping Horse" to Hill 52. On January 26, the battalion came under corps control and took up corps missions.

b. During the operations the 65th Engineers operated water points on the Ilu River, at Jones' Spring, at Terrell Bridge and at the lower Matanikau.

c. Class IV DP's were operated from the foot of Wright Road and from Dead Cow Ridge. Fortunately the division brought enough wire, sandbags, and pickets. However there was an acute shortage of cutting tools.

179. COMMENTS.--a. During the entire operation the 65th Engineer Battalion was short much equipment and most of its transportation. It lacked two bulldozers out of four -- had no dump trucks - no gas operated saws - was short all stream crossing equipment and countless minor items. Equipment which is normally available to the division from the corps park was missing, as were corps engineer troops. The bulldozers on hand were of inferior make, partially worn out and too light for the job. Rarely was more than one working at a time. The absence of spare parts made maintenance difficult.

b. On the other hand engineer operations were facilitated immeasurably by a number of saving factors: First, the policy of the Commanding General and the division staff of warning the division engineer in advance what would be required of the engineers and requiring engineer time and personnel estimates upon which to base the division's plans for those phases of the operations limited by engineer considerations. Prompt, continuous, and detailed reconnaissances by battalion staff and company commanders well in advance of engineer operations, and at times, even in advance of friendly front lines made possible the estimates the division required and which were so necessary to the battalion's operations.

c. Second, Mother Nature was very kind -- the "rainy" season was relatively "dry". One day's sun did more for road maintenance than an entire battalion; one day's continuous rain undid many day's work-- might have caused operations to bog down hopelessly.

d. Third, the tactical situation helped greatly in that it allowed alignment of the roads along the ridges, thereby greatly reducing the drainage problem which was so acute in the lowlands where laborious corduroying had to be resorted to, to make the roads passable to all.

e. Fourth, the 57 Engineers helped greatly -- lent equipment and cooperated in every way. The infantry and the artillery helped by building and maintaining their local roads and assisting on the main ones.

f. Last, but far from the least, the engineering task was facilitated by the superior quality of the american truck -- with its front wheel drive and auxiliary transmission -- roads now are passable which in the last war would have been impassable mud holes. In fact, the jeep itself built many more miles of road than did the bulldozers.

180. LESSONS LEARNED.---a. The 65th Engineer Battalion along with all other units learned much from this action, much about jungle road building, and proved that the American Army could make better use of the "impassable" jungle than could the supposed expert, the Japanese.

b. It taught that aggressive reconnaissance was necessary, that the engineers had to get out to the front, and beyond, to get information if it was to be worthwhile.

c. It taught them to be constantly on the search for possible water points: to work with the infantry and artillery S-4's in their "recons" for water so as to enable the installation of engineer water units as far forward as possible.

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## SECTION II

### OPERATIONS OF THE DIVISION SIGNAL COMPANY

Lt. Col. M. P. Chadwick, Signal Corps

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181. OPERATIONS.--The division signal plan for the initial phases of the recent action, put the main axis of signal communication along the Beach Road to the Matanikau, then up this river, paralleling the Marine Trail, to the 27th Infantry CP. Wright Road was the wire route to the 35th Infantry CP, with lateral lines to the Division CP on Hill 49, and across to the 27th Infantry. As the 27th Infantry CP moved forward, the main wire axis followed through the jungle to Hill 66, and then along the "Snake". While the 27th was making its rapid advance, lines were extended along the Beach Road, from the Matanikau toward Kokumbona, and there connected in to the 27th CP, after the beach had been cleared of the enemy. Radio communication was used with corps and the regiments only when lines were out. Lack of transportation was the biggest difficulty in installing and maintaining wire communication. The Signal Company had only 6 jeeps for use both for wire crews and for messenger service. The infantry communication sections usually had only one jeep for all purposes. Lines to corps were repeatedly knocked out by bombing near the Fighter Strip. Those to the regiments were cut by the traffic along Wright Road, and by the Engineers in cutting trees when improving the trails. Better liaison between the engineers and communication personnel must be established. Wire details should be provided with bolos for clearing new wire routes through the jungle, away from the traffic along the "Jeep" trails. The T/BA allotment of belts and climbers should be increased for jungle operation. Repair of wire lines at night is extremely difficult, as no lights are permitted and there is danger of being shot at by our own troops. To avoid this, the crews must work steadily during daylight hours improving their lines. Wire details of all units should be commended for their good work, often under enemy fire. Guards should be provided for these details. In regimental headquarters companies, no personnel is available for such guards, and they will have to be taken from other units.

182. COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE REGIMENTS AND BATTALIONS.--In considering communications within the regiment and battalions, we must always keep in mind that communication is a function of command. In this action, those commanders who planned the use of their signal equipment in the ways best suited to the situation and terrain were the most successful in obtaining satisfactory communications. Some battalion commanders found one type of radio best adapted to their needs, while others found better success with different types. Wire



communication is always best, until rapid movement and long lines require the use of radio. Then the proper radio equipment must be made available at the right place. The commander must be familiar with the capabilities of each type of signal equipment. It is the responsibility of the commander that his signal equipment is not abandoned during an action, but is carried forward for future use with necessary supplies of wire and batteries, and that damaged

equipment is turned over to the regimental communication officer for delivery to the Division Signal Repair Unit. Each infantry regiment abandoned large numbers of serviceable sound power telephones, wire reels, and portable radio sets during the action. More than one hundred sound power phones have not yet been recovered, and cannot yet be replaced. Each unit must take steps to see that damaged equipment is sent to the rear, and that serviceable equipment is not lost. During the period January 10th to 25th, the Division Repair Unit repaired and returned 70 radio sets for units of the division, usually within 24 hours.

183. EQUIPMENT USED DURING OPERATIONS.--a. The principal items of signal equipment used during the action will be discussed briefly. The Signal Corps system of numbering radio sets is confusing so I will try to identify them in other ways. The SCR-193, our old reliable long range vehicular radio set, was found to be best for air-ground, and for communication from the Division to Corps, and to the regiments. The radio command cars cannot be moved over the worst "Jeep" trails. The SCR-193 sets installed in engineer half-tracks are more satisfactory in this respect.

b. The SCR-284, standard, 7 mile range, portable set for the infantry, and the substitute set issued to the field artillery, was used with some success, but had several disadvantages. It requires four or five men to carry it, and these men have to be relieved after a short distance. The set is not rugged enough to be carried in a "jeep" over rough roads. The noise made by the hand generator attracts sniper fire.

c. The SCR-511, called the "Cavalry Guidon Set", became available in limited numbers to the division during the action. No time was available to train operators in its use, and supply of dry batteries was inadequate. It has a range of 5 miles over nearly all terrain. It is light enough for one man to carry. Within its capabilities it proved our most dependable set. More of these are needed for the use of both field artillery and infantry units.

d. The SCR-536 radio set - 1 mile handy-talkie, was a valuable piece of equipment. Its use must be confined to its rated distance range. It is too fragile for rough handling, and must not be thrown around like a telephone.

e. The old walkie-talkies, SCR-194 and 195 radio sets, when used between high points worked well. No attempt should be made to use these sets in the jungle.

f. The standard EE-8-A and sound power telephones were very satisfactory. The sound power phone should be used only on direct lines, which are constantly manned, as it has no ringing device. The 3rd Battalion, 161st Infantry made use of Japanese phones to signal on sound power phone lines. The Japanese phones, when used by some of the units, proved to be inferior and were not reliable as a substitute for the EE-8-A telephone.

g. The switchboards were satisfactory, but additional switchboards were needed to supplement the T/BA allowances.

184. LESSONS LEARNED.--a. The assault wire was valuable in the front line, but did not stand up long. It must be replaced as soon as possible by wire, W-110-B. In the jungle, ground return circuits worked well. The Signal Company had good results with the use of the 5 pair rubber-covered cable along the axis of communication. This cable was cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile lengths with terminals between sections.

b. Much of the damage to equipment was due to defects in the sets, and the fact that they were not designed for use over such rough country. Any radio set carried over a "jeep" trail will be subjected to a terrific shaking up, which will often put it out of commission before it is put to use. These sets should be protected from jolts during transit. They must be protected from rain. It was not found possible to make water proof covers for them before leaving Oahu, but this should be done as soon as materials are available. Until that time, a shelter-half should always be provided for each radio set.

c. Great difficulty was experienced in delivering signal supplies to units. This has been described in general by G-4. Close cooperation between the Division Signal Officer, and the regimental communication officers solved this problem.

d. Practically no attempt was made within the regiments to obtain any degree of signal security over the radio. No voice code prepared by division can ever meet the needs of subordinate units. Each unit commander must prepare in advance, his own voice radio code, adapted for use within his unit, to meet the special situation. If this code is captured, it will then not endanger the signal security of the rest of the division.

e. The Radio Intelligence Platoon of the Signal Company was organized just before leaving Oahu. During this action, it was attached to the XIV Corps for coordinated operation with the Americal Division. It gained valuable experience in locating enemy stations, copying Japanese code, and monitoring the division radio nets. It should be a considerable asset to the division in future operations.

f. The Division Signal Officer has made a report giving the defects found in the signal equipment of the division, and suggesting remedies, and changes in Tables of Basic Allowances and in Tables of Organization. This report included the suggestions made by regimental and field artillery communication officers.

## SECTION III

### OPERATIONS OF THE DIVISION QUARTERMASTER COMPANY

Lt. Col. Frederick T. Voorhees, Division Quartermaster

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185. INTRODUCTION.--a. Operations of the Division Quartermaster during the Guadalcanal Campaign, 10 January - 26 January, 1943, cannot be outlined satisfactorily without brief mention of the activities which preceeded actual hostilities. The Quartermaster must do most of his work before, not after, a battle begins. If proper supplies are available to provide for all probable requirements and a system is set up for their timely distribution to the combat troops the bulk of the work has been done. Without these preparations, no amount of hard work is likely to succeed. In view of this fact, it is necessary to consider operations preparatory to the campaign along with the landing, transportation and storage problems which arose concurrently. An analysis of these operations with a view to improving the speed and efficiency of subsequent ones is important, as those just completed would not have been any too successful had the landing been effected under fire.

b. In order to better understand what may be expected of a Quartermaster Company, Triangular Division, its capabilities and theoretical missions will be shown. The company is divided into a company headquarters, a supply section and a transportation section. It takes care of its own interior economy, draws and distributes Class I, II and III supplies and has three truck platoons operating forty eight cargo trucks, with the necessary dispatchers, mechanics, etc., for their proper maintenance. This section functions under the supervision of the division transportation officer, who has the facilities to operate a division motor pool if desired.

c. The normal mission of the company is to draw supplies from higher echelon facilities, railhead, beachhead, or depot, and distribute them at once to the various organizations in the division. If distances are great, most of the transportation is required in these operations, although it is possible to take care of a considerable amount of additional hauling. It is not contemplated under present tables of organization that much else will be done with this company. Other Quartermaster activities such as depot operations, large scale troop movements, graves registration, salvage and reclamation are supposed to be handled by higher echelons or troops attached for the purpose.

d. In this situation a radical change was required. We had few trucks, we had a large quantity of stores to handle, sort and store, and we had no attached troops to perform the special quartermaster

condition, giving the troops the benefit of any items that seem practical. If, as usually will be the case, too much is issued, it can be left in the unit dump for later recovery. In this way there is less likelihood of troops going hungry.

(4) In general, the supply of troops in this campaign presented few problems for the quartermaster, except in one respect. It was usually impossible to get information regarding the tactical situation and probable supply requirements in advance. Contrary to popular belief, supply of troops in the field is not fully automatic. Some arrangements have to be made ahead of time for timely and adequate supply. It is believed that many instances of rush midnight jobs could have been avoided if the plan was revealed to the Quartermaster when it was in the possibility stage rather than after it was halfway completed. More use could then be made of routine operations with consequent conservation of manpower and transportation. When a doughboy works day and night for a few days he usually gets a little time to rest up. A quartermaster, while glad to work day and night when necessary, does not get to rest afterwards. Troops continue to eat and wear out their equipment. Any break he can get to enable him to accomplish his mission during routine working periods, regardless of whether they are by day or night, will be appreciated.

b. Salvage:

The 120 days maintenance in class II supplies was apparently based on some other theater. It was found that the rate of consumption on many items was over twice as fast as contemplated and zero in others. As a result the problem became acute on many critical items. This was aggravated by the wholesale abandonment of equipment. Command action is necessary in all units to correct the abandonment of property and to institute some system whereby lost property is recovered and reissued. If not needed in the organization, it should be turned in for issue elsewhere. The 27th Infantry realized this at the outset and organized and operated a highly effective system of salvage in their zone of action. The new equipment they drew as a result of these operations was negligible. Other units, who had no effective salvage operations were forced to draw unreasonable quantities of new equipment and depleted our maintenance stock almost immediately on many items.

c. Graves Registration:

This service was provided by a provisional section organized in the company without additional personnel. It collected dead at regimental collecting points and both hospitals, arranged for burial and completed all necessary records and disposition of the property of the deceased. The work of this section was handicapped during combat by failure of organizations to furnish required information promptly, especially the coordinate location of and details concerning personnel

buried in the field. This failure is now complicating the transfer of these men to the cemetery, as some cannot be located. In future battles, locations of graves should be carefully marked with one of the dog tags placed conspicuously on the grave in such manner that it does not become detached, the location accurately plotted and full information furnished the graves registration section as soon as possible.

188. SUMMARY.---a. The following lessons should be remembered in future operations:

(1) Give the quartermaster a chance to do his job in connection with movements of freight by placing available facilities at his disposal and letting him work it out. Keep to many fingers out of the pie.

(2) Make full use of the division transportation officer and his section from the beginning of any operation, especially where trucks are at a premium.

(3) Inform the Quartermaster as soon as possible of any plans involving supply. He would rather work out details for numerous projects which never materialize than to be called on at the last minute to perform a miracle in supplying belatedly and incompletely some operation which began without notice.

(4) Do not take more equipment to the field than is required. Collect lost equipment at all times. If you don't need it, turn it in.

(5) Take care of information relative to graves registration as promptly and completely as possible to avoid losing complete track of anyone.

b. Observance of these principles will greatly facilitate and expedite all future operations of the division as far as quartermaster activities are concerned. This will result in improved service for all.

## SECTION IV

### THE OPERATIONS OF THE DIVISION ORDNANCE COMPANY

Lt. Col. Phillip F. Lindeman, Ordnance Officer.

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189. PLANS AND PREPARATIONS.---a. Ordnance was called upon to operate a Division Ammunition Point. This was located at Wright Road. The company not only manned the dump clerically but actually manned the dump physically with the help of twenty-one, (21), natives. The men, who manned this dump, should be given credit along with the troops who carried supplies and ammunition to the front line units. At the peak of the combat these men worked so hard, that by the end of the fifteen day period three actual reliefs of manpower took place at the dump. The amount of tonnage handled by these men amounted to 3,000 tons. To give you an idea of part of the picture, 26,411 rds. of artillery ammunition was issued along with 60,371 rds. of mortar ammunition and 36,000 Hand Grenades. This is quite a load considering the number of times this ammunition had to be handled. During combat the small arms and artillery section of the company did yeoman service. Often the man who demands immediate service sees only his part of the picture and often forgets that perhaps other business is more urgent at the time. However, in spite of their demands, no calls were left unanswered. The armanent section of the company went everywhere and anywhere upon call.

190. FIELD MAINTENANCE.---a. To give immediate service in the field two (2) emergency repair trucks, carrying replacement weapons up to and including machine guns and a limited supply of cleaning and preserving materials, along with one wrecker were moved up to the Wright Road dump. These emergency repair trucks visited the service companies of the regiments daily and then returned to the dump to repair the weapons they collected along with those weapons being brought in for repair.

b. The wreckers went out on many calls. The crews had to work under conditions far from ideal. The roads and traffic caused the wrecker crews many difficulties and, in spite of it all, they came through in fine fashion. The wreckers answered during this period 150 emergency calls. Incidentally, in spite of all the accidents only two vehicles were lost to the division during the operations. These two vehicles were salvaged and used for spare parts. The wrecker proved itself over and over again as being a very necessary piece of equipment during combat.

c. Before leaving the subject of field maintenance, I wish to point out that repairs to weapons and replacement of wea-

pons were made available to the 27th Infantry the morning after they took Kokumbona. The 161st Infantry was also contacted for repairs and replacements of weapons while they were still past Cape Esperance. Upon the completion of the operations these emergency repair trucks again were sent to each regiment and repaired and replaced weapons, so that no shortage on arms would occur if the division was called into action again.

d. During the fifteen days the Automotive platoon was far from being idle. The mud, the type of roads, and night movements all contributed to the number of accidents. This platoon repaired and put back into service 157 vehicles. They often worked after dark to get immediate repairs done on wrecked vehicles. It seems funny, in a way, to inject stove repairs into this speech, but stoves as well as everything else, played their part during the operation. The men repaired during this period over 100 stove burners; that alone required many man hours of work.

191. REMOVAL OF DUDS.---a. The company was called upon to remove duds; both enemy and our own and some were removed under hazardous conditions. Enemy ammunition and guns were also destroyed. Various types of enemy ammunition, weapons and instruments were brought in for G-2.

192. LESSONS LEARNED.

(1) There was a tendency to overstock on ammunition. This meant that much time, labor and transportation was wasted. It also contributes to waste of ammunition. This being a command function, we urge that some thought be given to ammunition demands during operations.

(2) In ordering ammunition be specific. Order by type and by number of rounds.

(3) When troops are moved, we would like to be immediately informed. Much time was lost in trying to relocate various infantry and artillery units. However, everything considered, it was not too bad but could be improved upon.

(4) In placing calls for service and for the removal of duds, definite locations should be given or a guide provided. The person making the call should give his name so he can be contacted. Many hours again were spent looking for units and duds.

(5) It would help if channels of supply were strictly adhered to. Place responsibility where it belongs, as this develops initiative and leadership. Outside interference is usually caused by someone trying to help out, but at times it hinders more than helps. I am a firm believer in knowing where our job ends and where the other man's takes over. Work through your regimental or battalion supply officers, they will appreciate it as much as the services. Often, duplications took place because all concerned knew nothing about it.

## SECTION V

### OPERATION OF THE DIVISION MEDICAL BATTALION

Lt. Col. Arthur H. Thompson, Medical Corps

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193. INTRODUCTION.--a. The medical phase of the military operations on the Island of Guadalcanal during January, 1943 is best described under five categories. First, the activities of Collecting Companies "A" and "B" from January second to January tenth. Second, the evacuation plan for the attack of January tenth. Third, the chronological consideration of various medical activities in different sectors. Fourth, a discussion of the hospitalization, statistics in reference to sickness and casualties and fifth, some of the lessons we learned during these operations.

b. First, the activities of Collecting Companies "A" and "B" from the second to the tenth of January. Lt. Col. Buchanan informed Lt. Col. Thompson at 1700 on the second of January that the corps had ordered a collecting company of the 25th Medical Battalion to assist the 101st Medical Regiment in evacuation of casualties of the Americal Division. The following morning at 1000, Collecting Company "B" was bivouacked west of Wright Road, a mile south of the Beach Road. Captain Jernigan spent the entire day of January third reconnoitering the litter route between the end of Wright Road and eastern slope of Hill 27. During this reconnaissance a shorter litter route between Hill 27 and Wright Road was arranged, reducing the litter haul from approximately five miles to three miles. Col. Thompson, as a result of a personal reconnaissance on January seventh, decided Collecting Company "A" would be used to reinforce Collecting Company "B" inasmuch as the litter bearers were tired and the casualties were becoming more numerous.

c. The litter bearers in this sector, as well as in others, carried out their work in an excellent manner under extremely trying conditions. They moved parallel to our lines and over miles of rugged jungle trails in intense heat. Intermittent heavy rains enhanced the difficulties of their hand evacuation, and in addition they were frequently subjected to enemy fire of all types.

194. EVACUATION PLAN.--The evacuation plan for the attack of January tenth. Detailed reconnaissance of all front line areas had been made by the medical officers of this Division during the latter part of December and early part of January. The area west of the Lunga and along the Beach Road as far west as Wright Road was



reconnoitered for a suitable location of a division hospital. The medical troops were disposed as follows on January tenth: the attached medical personnel of all units were organized in readiness to provide direct support to their organizations. Casualties were evacuated by litter from all front line areas to the end of existing "jeep" trails where collecting points were established. "Jeep" ambulances of two types, each capable of carrying three litter patients, transported all casualties to the collecting companies which were established at the end of roads passable for standard ambulances. Evacuation to the hospitals was then completed by ambulance. Collecting Companies "A" and "B" were to continue operating the collecting station on Windmill Hill with an advance collecting point at the end of Wright Road. Company "C" established a collecting station just west of the Matanikau River on the Marine Trail at the base of Hill 66. Collecting Companies "A" and "C" also maintained a bivouac area along the Beach Road near the mouth of the Matanikau where the men came back from the front at night for rest.

195. CHRONOLOGY OF OPERATIONS.--a. Chronological consideration of the various medical activities in different sectors. The 35th Infantry attacked on the morning of January tenth with Collecting Companies "A" and "B" in the positions described above. The scheme of maneuver employed by the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 35th Infantry was a wide envelopment of the enemy's right flank. The 3rd Battalion was the leading Battalion and the 1st Battalion was one half day's march behind the 3rd Battalion. This type of maneuver over rough hilly jungle terrain, devoid of roads, presents a formidable problem in regard to evacuation of the wounded. It was quite obvious by nightfall of January eleventh that the 1st and 3rd Battalions were moving so rapidly that casualties could not be evacuated to the rear. Thus it became necessary for these battalions to carry their casualties forward as they advanced. The following is an illustration of the difficulties encountered during evacuation in this sector. Captain Jernigan and Lieutenant Ashley began establishing their litter relay posts between Hill 27 and the end of Wright Road at 0830 January eleventh. They arrived on Hill 27 at 1030 and by 1530 reached the 1st Battalion Aid Station with twelve litter bearers. Two walking wounded and one litter patient weighing two hundred and thirty five pounds had to be evacuated. The litter bearers started their return trip with these patients at 1600. Two units of blood plasma were ordered by telephone from the 2nd Battalion Aid Station for the litter patient. These arrived at 1900 and one unit was administered immediately. This party spent that night on the trail in a soaking rain. The remaining unit of plasma was administered in the morning. The litter squad with their casualties arrived at the end of Wright Road at 1130, having spent eight hours on this one haul.

b. Captain Clark, S-3 of the 25th Medical Battalion, as a result of a personal reconnaissance reported on the afternoon of the eleventh that those two battalions could be supplied, and wounded evacuated by boats on the Matanikau. This information was relayed to G-4 of the Division who made arrangements for boats, rafts, and out-

board motors. Initially, G-1 of the Division supplied forty enlisted men from the Cannon Company of the 161st Infantry Regiment to operate the boats from the South Bridge of the Matanikau to the base of Hill 44. Company "A" was ordered to evacuate the casualties from the 1st and 3rd Battalions over this route. The patients were carried from Hills 43 and 44 by litter bearers of this company and natives. A cable with an improvised sled made of three-fourths inch pipe, which served as a frame to hold a Stokes litter, was used to lower patients down Hill 44. Additional necessary medical treatment was given in the collecting point at the base of Hill 44. The wounded were here loaded on boats and rafts for the trip to the South Bridge of the Matanikau where a collecting station was established. This boat trip down the Matanikau covered three miles and traversed nine rapids across which boats had to be lifted. At the South Bridge of the Matanikau patients were transferred to smaller rafts which were towed by motor boats to the North Bridge of the Matanikau. Here patients were seen by a medical officer and placed in ambulances which transported them to the Division Hospital. Collecting Company "A" continued to evacuate the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 35th Infantry until the twenty first of January when the 161st Infantry was committed to action. Company "B" took over the evacuation of casualties of the 1st and 3rd Battalions on January twenty first, and operated this route until the end of the action. Collecting Company "B" also continued to evacuate casualties from the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry over Wright Road until the Gifu strongpoint was finally reduced on the twenty-fourth of January.

c. Returning now to the 27th Infantry. On the eighth of January, Captain Clark, Captain Diskin, the commanding officer of Collecting Company "C", and the regimental surgeon of the 27th Infantry made a reconnaissance to the base of Hill 66. It was then decided that Collecting Company "C" would establish a collecting station at the base of Hill 66 on the Marine Trail west of the Matanikau. Two separate litter routes were to be established, one to the base of Hill 66 to evacuate the casualties of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, and a second litter route along the Marine Trail to the base of Hill 54. Collecting Company "C" continued to evacuate casualties of the 27th Infantry until the 27th of January when they were relieved. From January tenth to January twenty-third the collecting station was located on Hill 66. The station was moved forward to the end of the "Snake" on January twenty-third. Members of this company advanced with the 27th Infantry when they entered Kokumbona on this date. Subsequently boats were used to evacuate patients from Kokumbona to Kum Beach.

d. The 161st Infantry advanced on January twenty-second with the mission of flanking Hill 87 by way of Hill V after capturing Hills X, Y, and Z. Collecting Company "A" evacuated the casualties of this regiment. The 161st advanced rapidly on the twenty-second of January without suffering any casualties, however, ten sick patients were evacuated on this date and an advanced collecting point was

established on Hill 53.

e. The Beach Road to Kokumbona was open on January twenty-fifth and casualties in this area were evacuated over it.

196. HOSPITALIZATION.--a. Discussion of hospitalization and statistics in reference to sickness and casualties. The forward and rear hospitals together had sufficient T/BA equipment and personnel for temporary hospitalization of two hundred and fifty patients. The rear hospital on the morning of January ninth had three hundred and ninety one patients and the forward hospital was empty in anticipation of heavy battle casualties on the tenth.

b. Eight hundred and thirty-two patients were evacuated from the island during the period January ninth to twenty-sixth. There were still four hundred and thirty-two patients in the two hospitals on January twenty-sixth. Two hundred and sixteen officers and men were killed in action and about three hundred battle casualties were evacuated to the hospitals. Two thirds of the three hundred battle casualties, or two hundred, were evacuated from this island. There were four hundred and eighty six patients admitted to the hospital because of malaria or fourteen more patients than were killed and wounded in battle. There were also three hundred and nineteen serious cases of diarrhea and dysentery admitted to the hospital, or nineteen more than the total battle casualties. From January ninth to January twenty sixth, the average admission rate was one hundred patients per day.

c. The medical officers and enlisted men in these two hospitals did a magnificent job in caring for the sick and battle casualties. Once a wounded man arrived at the hospital his chances of living were excellent, as ninety seven per cent recovered.

197. LESSONS LEARNED.--a. There is no substitute for active, continuous, aggressive reconnaissance on the ground. It is possible to keep medical installations and routes of evacuation functioning with maximum efficiency by this means and this means alone.

b. Intimate knowledge of the tactical plan and the status of the military operation is essential at all times. Efficient evacuation will be impossible if this principle is violated.

c. Battalion aid stations must make provisions for transporting their equipment and supplies by hand. The standard medical chests are too bulky for this purpose and mortar pouches or special packs must be provided for this contingency, otherwise mobility cannot be maintained.

d. Long arduous litter hauls will be the rule rather than the exception, and provisions for securing extra litter bearers must be made before the casualties actually exist. The infantry regiments are the logical source of litter bearer reinforcements.

e. Night evacuation from forward areas is undesirable because of the tactical plan for night defense, and due to the excessive number of unavoidable accidents which occur during the hours of darkness.

f. "Jeep" ambulances are remarkably efficient vehicles for evacuation of wounded. Equipped with Stokes litters they will follow the "doughboy" anywhere. They are truly a lifesaver for both supply and evacuation during our recent operation.

g. The clearing company of a medical battalion was not designed nor equipped to furnish semi-permanent hospitalization for divisional casualties. Adequate corps or army medical support should be provided to assure efficient hospitalization.

h. It is essential to the health of the command that rigid field sanitation be carried out in all units. This is especially true in advancing operations where supporting units occupy areas recently evacuated by tactical troops. The dead must be buried promptly and the use of slit trenches must be required whenever it is tactically feasible.

## SECTION VI

### OPERATIONS OF THE DIVISION SUPPLY

Lt. Col. David H. Buchanan, G.S.C., G-4

|                               | Paragraph |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Introduction .....            | 198       |
| Salvage .....                 | 199       |
| Motor Transportation .....    | 200       |
| Planning .....                | 201       |
| Camouflage .....              | 202       |
| Reliance .....                | 203       |
| Pillage and Cooperation ..... | 204       |

198. INTRODUCTION.--A majority of the lessons learned in the Division's supply operations between January 10 and 23 were the results of errors made. In most cases the errors were immediately discernable and corrective measures could be, and were taken at once. It would be sheer stupidity to repeat our errors; it would be criminal not to profit from the lessons learned. Hence this summary of lessons learned, even though most of them have already been pointed out and discussed in preceeding conferences. The repetition is by way of emphasis.

199. SALVAGE.--Systematic, organized salvage is absolutely necessary and must be initiated by the troops; the companies and battalions, on the ground. The reason is quite simple - if troops abandon, lose or throw away more material than can be replaced, some one must do without; and no amount of calling on the QM and Ordnance, and G-4s and S-4s can alter the situation when there simply isn't any more. Moreover, a senseless waste of material is essentially criminal, especially in this theater, in these times. Here the proverbial ounce of prevention is still worth a pound of cure. Men, not overburdened, going into combat will not abandon or lose so much. A few words in explanation and admonition to our men and a little intelligent planning as to quantities needed both on the individual and in organizational dumps will do much to solve the salvage problem.

200. MOTOR TRANSPORTATION.--The greatest possible conservation of motor transport is mandatory. Preventive maintenance is of paramount importance; especially when operating on the shoe string we had in this action. Shops must be established and blacked out for use during daylight and darkness, and crews kept operating day and night servicing vehicles whenever possible. Meager transportation must be pooled and relief drivers furnished for movement all day and all night, every day and every night.

201. PLANNING.--Intelligent and flexible planning is imperative for successful supply. It is necessary to make plans and alternate plans which actually outdistance the tactical plans, so that the ground work can be laid to supply the tactical cat no matter which way

it jumps. Timely information is an absolute prerequisite to intelligent planning. Why shoot your supply man a fast curve ball over the corner when he has been led to expect a slow one, down the alley. It is the responsibility of supply to keep informed -- but it is also the responsibility of the staffs to inform supply; something entirely too often forgotten. The best information, however, is derived from personal reconnaissance. What is actually happening on the ground is best seen and understood on the ground where it is happening. No amount of verbal information or map study can do the work of actual reconnaissance on the ground itself. After plans are made, resourcefulness in the accomplishment of these plans is necessary, if they are to be accomplished in fact. The means at hand, plus resourcefulness in their use, must be made to serve the purpose, and accomplish our plans.

202. CAMOUFLAGE.--Camouflage, concealment, dispersal and protection of supply installations were conspicuous in this operation by their absence. The lessons we should take in this connection are none the less valuable, as should be obvious to all. Never again, in all probability, may we so flagrantly disregard established principles and not pay for so doing. Our own air superiority - or rather the Jap lack of any air, plus his failure to use artillery, undoubtedly started us into bad habits which we must recognize and correct. Our supply installations must be camouflaged, concealed and dispersed. Covered routes must be used and alternate routes developed. Hauling and movement by night will have to be the rule in the future and we must develop camouflage consciousness if we are to succeed. It's something we all must recognize, think about, and consider in our planning.

203. RELIANCE.--I know of no one word to describe this next lesson unless it is the word "reliance". By this I mean, taking your helpers into your confidence, keeping them informed of the situation and as to what is required and allowing them to do the job which is their specialty unhindered and with no one interfering. Results must be observed, of course. If the results are unsatisfactory, get new helpers.

204. PILLAGE AND COOPERATION.--a. A lesson learned the hard way was the lesson of pillage; pillage from without the division and pillage within the division. Supplies were pillaged aboard ship, on boats between ship and shore, in bivouac, from the dumps, and worst of all from supply trains of various kinds actually enroute to the front where lack of the material pillaged might have resulted in death and disaster. It was a sorry lesson we had to learn, but learn it we did. The answer is not entirely to increase the number of guards. Guards of course will always be a necessary evil, human nature being what it is. But if discipline were perfect - guards would not be needed. If each individual performed his duty - guards would not be needed. If officers and NCO's would not connive in, direct, and actually join in the pillage; but rather endeavor to stop it, guards would not be necessary. As has been said before, this was indeed a sorry lesson we had to learn. The evil results of said practice are self-evident, as is the necessity for stopping it, and needs no further discussion.

b. The greatest lesson of all was the lesson of co-operation. Cheerful, 100% co-operation, sometimes given even before it was requested; co-operation working both ways, up the ladder and down the ladder. This is the eleven letter word which spells correction of most of our errors and failures. In the operation just described many sacred cows of peace time and garrison vintage had to be desecrated. These desecrations shocked, astounded and confounded some of the brethren who would say "you can't do that - it just isn't cricket", and would show you the book to prove it. However, doughboys maintained roads, cannon companies operated boat lines, artillery prime movers hauled freight, company clerks performed fatigue, ambulances carried supplies, mechanics worked all night, generals carried ammunition to the front for us, and we moved troops in the chief of staff's jeep. A good general practice? No. But it was necessary, we had it to do and we did it. We did it by co-operation - cheerful co-operation, 100% co-operation, especially after the first ice was broken. Let's not fail to profit from this lesson of co-operation, for it is a cure all, a panacea for almost all our difficulties.

## SECTION VII

### 205. COMMENTS OF THE DIVISION COMMANDER

One of the basic principles of the organization of the infantry division is that the division is assigned only the very minimum of service troops that it habitually requires. Whenever it operates alone it is supposed to be reinforced by additional service troops. Normally the division operates as part of a corps and is supported by corps service troops. But here the XIV Corps had had no service elements, so it was necessary that our service units perform corps as well as division supply functions. It is certainly a tribute to all of our service elements that they doubled in brass so effectively despite the shortage of transportation and equipment.

The fact that little mention of their communication problems has been made by tactical commanders should be taken as a commendation. Practically all of the critiques of maneuvers that I have heard have damned the Signal people. We did not have that here, which is a tribute to the Division Signal Company and the communications personnel throughout the division. Personally, I don't believe that any man in the division worked as hard as the signal men, particularly the linesmen. I have always taken my hat off to them.

I am going to say no more than of this very interesting conference that Colonel Buchanan and his assistants have given us today. I want to summarize however, our series of presentations. This is the last conference on our Guadalcanal operations, though we will have a special conference on signal communications next week for regiment and battalion commanders and communication personnel. I hope that you have all enjoyed those conference and have learned as much from them as I have. They have been very much worthwhile. I said in the initial conference that we were going to examine our operations critically; that when something went wrong we were going to be frank and say so, rather than paint a rosy picture of a perfect performance. That has been done. I take it for granted, that all of us have realized that when criticisms have been made they were not given in a personal sense, or directed against any particular unit. Our three major units, that is the three infantry regiments, faced widely differing situations. Each did splendid work and I don't want anyone to feel that mention of any one unit more than another reflects on the unit not so mentioned. We all made some mistakes but these simply gave flavor to our genuine accomplishments.

I had a note here to speak again on the question of teamwork and cooperation, as I did our first meeting, but Colonel Buchanan has said plenty on that subject at this conference and said it well.



I want at this time to read the citation given this division by the Commander of the XIV Corps:

HEADQUARTERS XIV CORPS

GENERAL ORDERS)  
 )  
NO.....52)

AGO # 453  
7 March 1943

"Citation for 25th Infantry Division"

1. I personally and officially commend the officers and enlisted men of the 25th Infantry Division for their outstanding performance of duty in action on Guadalcanal, S. I., during the period 10 January to 9 February, 1943.

2. The 25th Infantry Division making the main effort of the XIV Corps attacked through dense tropical jungles and over mountainous terrain against well organized positions manned by a tenacious enemy whose mission was to hold to the last man. This division by its rapid advance and skillful maneuver encircled and pocketed enemy centers of resistance and finally broke the enemy's power to offer further effective defense by fighting its way into Kokumbona.

It was largely through the sustained drive of the 25th Infantry Division that the last vestige of organized resistance on Guadalcanal was crushed and possession of this strategically important Island, so vital to projected operations, finally wrested from the hands of the Japanese on 9 February 1943.

3. The splendid results obtained are attributed directly to the superb leadership, fighting spirit and eagerness for combat inherent in the 25th Infantry Division.

/s/ A. M. Patch;  
/t/ A. M. PATCH,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

Gentlemen, we can all be very proud of that splendid citation.

APPENDIX

- I MAP OF GUADALCANAL
- II LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS  
XIV CORPS TO 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION
- III GLOSSARY OF HILL NAMES
- IV MOSAIC - NORTH COAST OF GUADALCANAL
- V MOSAIC - NORTH COAST OF GUADALCANAL  
Showing : Line of Departure  
Corps Objectives  
Division Objectives
- VI FIELD ORDER NO. 1, 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
8 JANUARY 1943
- VII PANORAMA OF THE ZONE OF ACTION  
  
From Division OP 10  
From Hill 27 (Mt. Austen)
- VIII FIELD ORDER NO. 1, XIV CORPS  
16 JANUARY 1943
- IX FIELD ORDER NO. 2, 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
20 JANUARY 1943
- X OBLIQUE VIEWS OF ZONE OF ACTIONS
- XI A PICTORIAL REVIEW OF DIVISION ACTION

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HEADQUARTERS XIV CORPS

A.P.O. #709,  
5 Jan. 43.

SUBJECT: Letter of Instructions.

TO : Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division.

MAP: Aerial Photomosaic, GUADALCANAL ISLAND, "3 of 8", 1:13,833

1.
  - a. See G-2 Estimate.
  - b. See Operations Overlay.
2. The 25th Infantry Division will relieve the 132d Infantry on MOUNT CESTON (AUSTIN) without delay, and, upon completion of this relief, will attack from that area and seize and hold the line approximately 3,000 yards to the west thereof. See Operations Overlay.
3.
  - a. The 132d Infantry will pass to the control of the Commanding General, Perimeter Defense, when relieved by the 25th Infantry Division. The Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division, will notify the Commanding General, Perimeter Defense, when this relief has been effected.
  - b. The 35th Infantry will become available to the Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division, upon relief from the Perimeter Defense.
  - c. The 25th Infantry Division will execute a passage of lines through the 3d Battalion 182d Infantry, the 1st Battalion 2d Marines, and the Reconnaissance Squadron Americal Division, and these units will be placed under the command of the Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division, when he indicates that he is ready to operate in the area now held by these units. The 3d Battalion 182d Infantry and the Reconnaissance Squadron Americal Division will revert to the command of the Commanding General, Perimeter Defense, and the 1st Battalion 2d Marines will revert to the command of the Commanding General, 2d Marine Division, when passing through by the 25th Infantry Division and released by the Commanding General thereof.
  - d. The 25th Infantry Division will be responsible for the security of its left (south) flank.
  - e. The 2d Marine Division will maintain contact with the right (north) flank of the 25th Infantry Division.

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APPENDIX II

- 170 -

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- f. The Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division, is authorized to deal directly with the Commanding General, 2d Marine Air Wing, in regard to air-ground support.

g. Artillery employment:

- (1) The Americal Division Artillery with Battery A 1st Amphibious Corps (155-mm How.), and Battery F 244th Coast Artillery (155-mm Gun), attached, generally from present positions, will continue to support the 2d Marine Division in its present position, but will be prepared to reinforce the 25th Infantry Division Artillery with fire in support of the advance of the 25th Infantry Division.
- (2) The 2d Battalion 10th Marines (75-mm How.) from present positions will fire in support of the advance of the 25th Infantry Division; its fires will be controlled by the 25th Infantry Division.
- (3) Battery H 244th Coast Artillery (5-inch Gun) will continue on present seacoast defense missions.
- (4) The 1st and 3d Battalions 10th Marines (75-mm How.) will revert to control of the Commanding General, Perimeter Defense, when replaced by the 2d Battalion 10th Marines (75-mm How.) and the 90th Field Artillery Battalion (155-mm How.), respectively.

4. a. Distributing Point, Class I and Class III ONLY: (71.5 - 200.0).

b. Distribution Point, all other supplies: ISLAND DUMP.

c. Evacuation to Division Hospital, 25th Infantry Division; overflow to 101st Medical Regiment.

d. Road maintenance:

- (1) The 57th Engineer Battalion Americal Division will be attached to the 2d Marine Division for road maintenance.
- (2) Maintenance of roads will be by divisions in own zones of action.
- (3) Maintenance by the 25th Infantry Division will include the entire WRIGHT ROAD.
- (4) In the zone of the 2d Marine Division, first priority will be given to the SKYLINE DRIVE.
- (5) The BEACH ROAD west to include the NORTH MATANIKAU BRIDGE will be maintained by the 26th Naval Construction Battalion.

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5. a. SOI, Hq Island Command, 26 Dec 42.  
b. Command Post: to be reported when determined.

A. M. PATCH,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

DISTRIBUTION:

| <u>Copy No.</u> | <u>Addressee</u>       |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1               | COMGEN CACTUS          |
| 2               | COMGEN 25TH INF DIV    |
| 3               | COMGEN 25TH INF DIV    |
| 4               | COMGEN 2d MAR DIV      |
| 5               | COMGEN 2d MAR DIV      |
| 6               | COMGEN 2d MAR DIV      |
| 7               | COMGEN 2d MAR AIR WING |
| 8               | COMGENPERIDF           |
| 9               | COMGENPERIDF           |
| 10              | COMGEN ALER DIV        |
| 11              | COMGEN ALER DIV        |
| 12              | COMNAVACT CACTUS       |
| 13              | COMGEN KOLI POINT      |
| 14              | COMSOPAC               |
| 15              | COMSOPAC               |
| 16              | COMGENSOPAC            |
| 17              | COMGENSOPAC            |
| 18              | COMAIRSOPAC            |
| 19              | G-1, XIV CORPS         |
| 20              | G-2, XIV CORPS         |
| 21              | G-3, XIV CORPS         |
| 22              | G-4, XIV CORPS         |
| 23              | SIG C, XIV CORPS       |
| 24              | INER C, XIV CORPS      |
| 25              | ARTY C, XIV CORPS      |

(Reproduced by 25th Infantry Division G-2)

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GLOSSARY OF HILL NAMES

MOSAIC II

| LOCATIONS                   | HILLS                | GRID               |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Galloping Horse          | 50 51 52 53 54 55 57 | 68 - 70, 197 - 199 |
| 2. Galloping Horse Head     | 53                   | 68, 197            |
| 3. Galloping Horse Forelegs | 57                   | 68.5, 198          |
| 4. Sea Horse                | 43 44                | 70, 197 - 198      |
| 5. Sea Horse Head           | 43                   | 69.5, 198          |
| 6. Kangaroo                 | 66                   | 69, 200 - 201      |
| 7. Snake                    | --                   | 67 - 68, 198.3     |
| 8. Dead Cow Ridge           | 518                  | 31.7 - 21.4        |

APPENDIX III









APPENDIX No 9





APPENDIX V





NORTH COAST GUADALCANAL ISLAND  
FROM 4 1/2 MILES WEST TO 3 MILES EAST  
OF POINT CRUZ  
(UNCONTROLLED MOSAIC)

FL. 8.25' ALT. 10,000' OCTOBER 12 '42  
SOPAC PHOTO INTERPRETATION UNIT

1000 2000 3000 4000 5000  
SCALE IN FEET

Line Jan 9  
1st Obj. Corps  
2nd Obj. Corps  
Changed - Boundary

FO #1

~~SECRET~~  
AUTH: CG25D

G-3

J.K.B.

H25D

Fwd Ech

8 Jan 43 0800

MAPS: West Sector 8-sheet Photo Map, MATANIKAU-KOKUMBONA area 1/14,000.  
Opn Overlay, Annex #1.

1.
  - a. Enemy, as shown on Opn Overlay. (Int Summary, Annex #2).
  - b.
    - (1) The 2d Marine Div will maintain contact with the right flank of the 25th Div. (See Opn Overlay).
    - (2) Corps Arty will support the attack on call.
    - (3) The 2d Fighter Grp supplemented by bombers will execute bombing and strafing missions from 0620 to 0635, 10 Jan, in area as shown on Opn Overlay, other missions on call thru air liaison officer at Div CP.
    - (4) The 3d Bn 182d Inf, Rcn Sq Americal Div and 1st Bn 2d Marines are atchd to the 25th Div effective 1800, 9 Jan.
2. The 25th Div with 3d Bn 182d Inf, Rcn Sq Americal Div, and 1st Bn 2d Marines atchd will attack at 0635, 10 Jan, and seize and hold the line approximately 3,000 yards west of Mt. Austin indicated on Opn Overlay. Boundaries, objective and formation: See Opn Overlay.
3.
  - a. The 27th Inf, with Rcn Sq Americal Div atchd, will attack generally to the southwest and seize and hold the division objective within its sector. (See Opn Overlay). It will be prepared to assist the advance of the 35th Infantry.
  - b. The 35th Inf, with the 25th Div Rcn Tr atchd, making its principal effort initially on its south flank, will seize HILL 44 (69.9 - 196.5), then continue its attack and seize and hold the division objective within its sector. (See Opn Overlay). It will protect the left flank of the Div. It will relieve the 132d Inf the night 8 - 9 Jan.
  - c. The 161st Inf upon relief from the perimeter defense will move to an assembly area to be announced later, and await orders in Div Res.
  - d. The Rcn Sq Americal Div is atchd to the 27th Inf until released by the CG 25th Div.
  - e. The 1st Bn 2d Marines will be released to the 2d Marine Div when passed thru by the 27th Inf.
  - f. Commencing at 0635, 10 Jan, the 3d Bn 182d Inf will advance and occupy the line shown on Opn Overlay and cover the division artillery positions. It will operate under division control.
  - g. The 25th Div Arty will fire a preparation from 0550 to 0620, 10 Jan, as shown on Opn Overlay, and be prepared to mass its fire in either Regtl Zone of action.  
The 8th FA Bn in direct support of the 27th Inf.  
The 64th FA Bn in direct support of the 35th Inf.  
The 89th and 90th FA Bns in general support.

- 1 -

APPENDIX VI

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- h. The 65th Engr Bn will maintain WRIGHT ROAD and furnish engineer support to the 27th and 35th Infantry.
  - x. (1) Every means will be used to maintain secrecy in movement from staging areas to final assembly areas. These movements will be under cover of darkness.  
(2) See SOP for other details.
4. See Adm O #1.
5. a. CP's Opn Overlay.  
b. See SOI for pyrotechnic and airplane panel signals.

J. LAWTON COLLINS,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding

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APPENDIX VI

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ADM 0 )  
: TO ACCOMPANY F. O. NO. 1  
NO. 1 )

HEADQUARTERS  
25TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
GUADALCANAL  
9 January 1943, 1200

Maps. West Sector 8-Sheet Photomap Matanikau-Kokumbona, 1/14,000;  
Opn Map, Annex #1.

1. SUPPLY:

a. Class I and III supplies.

(1) DPs - see Opn Map.

(a) Supplies will be carried forward daily by  
25th QM Co, to 27th Inf and 35th Inf, to the end of truck roads.

(b) All other organizations will draw from DPs  
according to the following schedule:

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| 65th Engr Bn.....  | 0700 |
| 25th Med Bn.....   | 0800 |
| 64th FA Bn.....    | 0830 |
| 8th F. A. Bn.....  | 0930 |
| 89th F. A. Bn..... | 1030 |
| 90th F. A. Bn..... | 1300 |
| 25th Sig Co.....   | 1400 |
| Hq Co .....        | 1430 |
| All others .....   | 1500 |

b. Small Arms Ammunition.

(1) Distributing points: see Opn Map.

(a) Small arms ammunition will be carried forward  
daily by 25th QM Co, to 27th and 35th Inf, to the end of truck roads.

(b) All other organizations will draw from dis-  
tributing points.

(2) Credits:

(a) Two units of fire allocated for all weapons  
in addition to two units of fire with infantry front line units.

(b) The ammunition expenditure report will be sub-  
mitted to G-4 daily. This will constitute an automatic requisition for  
the ammunition expended in the previous 24 hour period, to be replenished  
by the 25th QM Co. Emergency requisitions of ammunition are authorized  
on call to DP direct at any time.

c. Artillery Ammunition.

(1) DPs - see Opn Map.

(2) Artillery ammunition will be set up on the follow-  
ing basis per 100 rounds:

APPENDIX VI

~~SECRET~~

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85 HE Shell  
10 Time Shell  
5 Smoke Shell

(3) Credits: Two units of fire, in addition to two units at battery positions.

2. EVACUATION:

- a. Personnel casualties; for Coll Sta and Hosp - see Opn Map.  
b. Burial; See Adm Memo No. 44, Hq 25th Inf Div, 31 Dec. 1942.  
c. All captured material and documents will be forwarded without delay to G-2, thru the unit S-2.  
d. PW Coll Pts - See Opn Map.

3. TRAFFIC.

a. Circulation.

- (1) Main supply routes:  
(a) 27th Inf: Marine Trail.  
(b) 35th Inf: Wright Road.

b. Blackout lights (cat's eye) only will be used for night driving in forward areas.

4. PERSONNEL.

- a. Straggler line and Coll Pts - See Opn Map.  
b. Strength Reports and Replacements - See Section II, Adm Order No. 43, Hq 25th Inf Div, 26 Dec, 1942.

5. MISCELLANEOUS.

a. Rear Echelon, 25th Inf Div and subordinate units - near mouth of Ilu River on west bank.

By command of Major General COLLINS:

OFFICIAL:

WM. P. BLEDSOE,  
Colonel, General Staff Corps,  
Chief of Staff.

D. H. BUCHANAN,  
Lt. Col., G. S. C.  
A. C. of S. G-4.

APPENDIX VI



INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

MAPS: West Sector 8-Sheet Photo Map Matanikau - Kokumbona Area,  
1/14,000.

1. ENEMY SITUATION.

- a. Enemy forces on GUADALCANAL appear to be concentrated chiefly in the coastal area between PT. CRUZ and KOKUMBONA, and in the foothills extending to the S and SE thereof in the general direction of MT. AUSTEN.
- b. The defense dispositions appear to be in widely separated strong points with intervals covered by snipers, roving patrols and partially prepared positions occupied intermittently.
- c. Recent activities have consisted chiefly in sniping, light machine gun and mortar fire against our forward elements and minor patrol operations along our S flank. His operations in general have been characterized by crafty use of jungle terrain and vegetation, a high percentage of automatic weapons in occupied positions and very limited employment of artillery. The latter may be due to a low supply of ammunition.
- d. Unit identifications have established the presence on Guadalcanal since August 7, 1942, of major portions of four infantry regiments, the 4th, 16th, 29th and 124th, and smaller elements of the following units: 2d, 4th, and 7th FA, 38th and 45th FA Bns., (A/A), 10th Ind Mt. Art. and 20th Ind. Mt. Bn.; 3d Light Mortar Bn., 3 companies of the 1st Ind. Mortar Bn., 1 battery each of the 47th FA Bn., the 21st Heavy FA Bn., and the 1st Ind. Arty. Regt. Battle casualties, landing losses, disease and the rigors of jungle campaigning have probably reduced the combat effective strength on the Island to a total somewhere between 7,000 and 10,000 men, plus any additional personnel which may have been landed from small craft recently. It is probable that the guns belonging to certain units were sunk or failed to reach shore with unit personnel and that ammunition supplies for their heavier weapons are extremely limited. Ammunition supply for smaller calibre guns should be considered as available for intensive but limited employment. In general, the effectiveness or capabilities of his artillery employment may be considered as only a small percentage of normal totals for units indicated.

2. TERRAIN.

To the W of our present positions terrain consists of rugged mountainous foothills sloping generally to the narrow coastal plain to the N and covered for the most part with dense jungle. While this jungle conceals the Japanese positions it will also afford concealment to our attacking force. This fact can be capitalized by vigorous outflanking maneuvers ~~wherever resistance is met.~~

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APPENDIX VI

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3. CONCLUSIONS.

a. Enemy Capabilities:

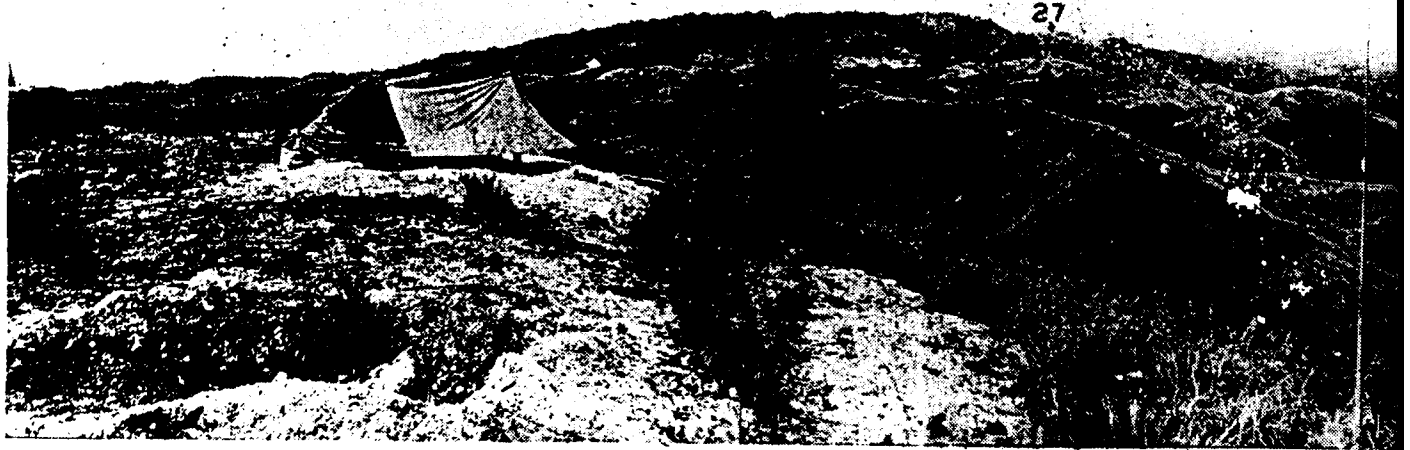
- (1) The enemy can defend in present positions employing his characteristic jungle tactics in concealment, sniping and infiltration.
- (2) He can launch local counterattacks but he is not believed capable of any counteroffensive at this time.
- (3) He can employ patrols and snipers in harassing action against flanks and rear of our advancing columns and our lines of communication.

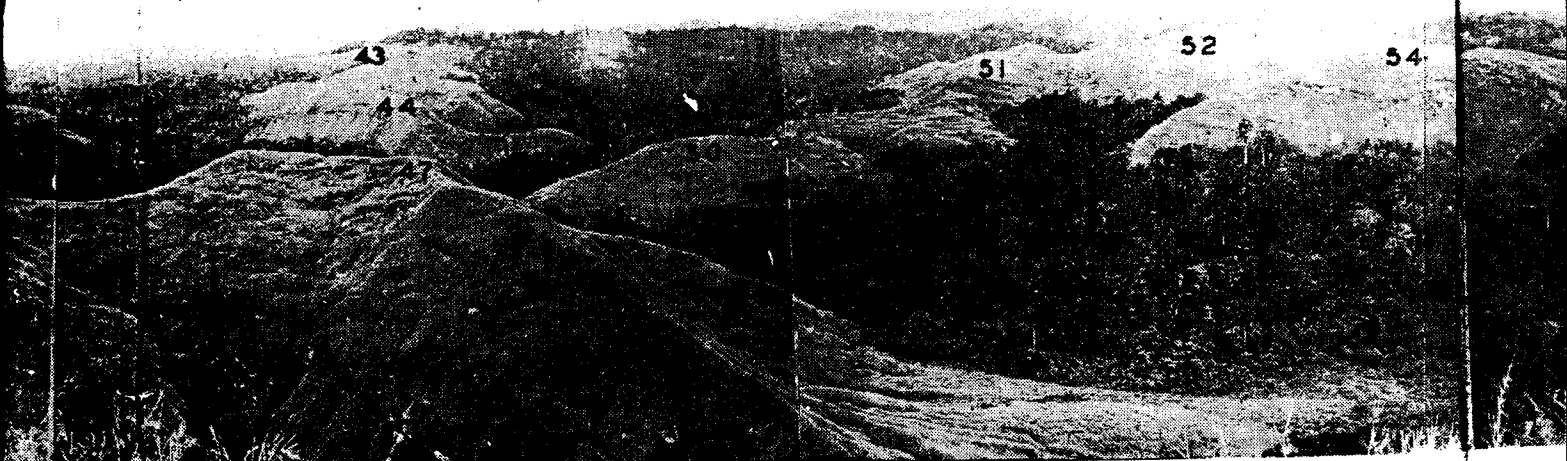
4. DIVISION OP. (70.970 - 197.88).

CRAWFORD  
G-2

~~SECRET~~

APPENDIX VI





ICRA



DRAM



ORAMA FROM DIVISION OP HILL 49



ORAMA FROM HILL 27

APPENDIX VII

CAPE ESPERANCE



PLATE VI

FO No 1.

MAP: Gridded 8-sheet photomap, 1:15,000.

1. a. See current Summary.

b. See Operations Overlay.

2. This Corps, from present positions, will attack to the west at a time and on a date to be announced later, seize the high ground in the vicinity of (68.0 - 201.8) - (67 - 200) - (65 - 198) and to the south thereof, and be prepared to continue the attack to the northwest. See Operations Overlay.
3. a. 2d Marine Division (less 2d and 8th Marine Regiments), one (1) Infantry regiment Americal Division attached, will attack to the west and seize that part of the Corps objective within its zone of action. It will maintain connection and contact with the 25th Infantry Division during the attack, will cover its left (south) flank, and will assist the 25th Infantry Division by fire in taking the high ground in the vicinity of (66.0-198.5). It will protect the shore line from the MATANIKAU RIVER (excl) to the objective (incl) against any attempted enemy landing.
- b. 25th Infantry Division will attack to the west and seize that part of the Corps objective within its zone of action. It will envelope or turn the enemy's right (south) flank and will protect the left (south) flank of the Corps.
- c. The Perimeter Defense (less one (1) Infantry regiment Americal Division), with 2d and 8th Marine Regiments attached, will intensify patrolling to insure protection of air fields and rear installations of the Corps. It will extend beach protection to insure against possible enemy landings as far west as the MATANIKAU RIVER (incl). One (1) Infantry regiment will be kept immediately available for use by the Corps Commander in support of the attack or in defense of rear areas; it will be committed to action only on orders of the Corps Commander. A second regiment of Infantry will be so utilized that it can be assembled in two and one half (2½) hours for use by the Corps Commander.
- d. 147th Infantry (-) will prepare to cover KOLI POINT AIR FIELD with two (2) rifle companies reinforced. The remainder of the 147th Infantry at KOLI POINT will await orders there in Corps reserve and will be committed to action only on orders of the Corps Commander.
- e. Artillery.  
(1) Americal Division Artillery, with 10th Marines (less two (2) battalions) (75-mm Pack How), Battery A 1st Marine Amphibious Corps (155-mm How), and Battery F

244th Coast Artillery (155-mm Gun) attached, will support the attack of the 2d Marine Division. It will be prepared to reinforce the fires in the zone of action of the 25th Infantry Division with two (2) battalions of light artillery and one (1) battalion of medium artillery.

- (2) Two (2) battalions 10th Marines (75-mm How) will remain on Perimeter Defense.
- (3) 25th Infantry Division Artillery will be prepared to reinforce the fires in the zone of action of the 2nd Marine Division with two (2) battalions of light artillery and one (1) battalion of medium artillery.
- (4) A fifteen (15) minute artillery, sea, and air preparation will precede the attack. Thereafter, artillery, without instructions from other headquarters, will promptly take under fire targets of opportunity.

f. 2d Marine Air Wing will support the attack and will engage targets of opportunity as indicated by organic air surveillance and this headquarters, paying particular attention to enemy artillery and concentrations of enemy troops. Requests for air-ground support missions will be transmitted to the AC of S, G-3, this headquarters.

g. Naval gunfire support, utilizing such naval vessels as are available, will be coordinated by the Corps Artillery Officer. This support will include an initial preparation of (15) minutes, commencing at H-15, in the areas (67.8 - 201.8) - (67.5 - 201.0) (66.8 - 200.2) and (67.8 - 201.8) - (66.2 - 200.0), followed by missions on targets of opportunity as far west as Visale Mission as indicated by air surveillance, shore surveillance, and this headquarters.

- h. (1) An artillery, sea, and air preparation of fifteen (15) minutes will precede the attack. Thereafter, these units will fire on targets of opportunity.
- (2) Isolated points of enemy resistance will be contained and by-passed; they will be reduced later. Maximum use will be made of artillery and air support in effecting reductions.
- (3) All Infantry units will keep their supporting artillery and the AC of S, G-3, this headquarters, advised of their locations at all times in order that targets of opportunity may be fired upon promptly.

4. a. Rations, gasoline, oil, and ammunition will be drawn directly from the ISLAND DUMP as long as practicable, thereafter from ADVANCE DUMP in the vicinity of (71.7 - 200.0). The 25th Infantry Division will exhaust the WRIGHT ROAD DUMP prior to drawing from the ADVANCE DUMP.

#### APPENDIX VIII



- b. Evacuation will be by divisions to Division Collecting Stations, thence by Corps to Clearing Hospitals.
  - c. Burial will be by the Quartermaster in ISLAND CEMETERY.
  - d. Prisoners of War will be sent to the rear by Divisions to Division Collecting Points, thence by Corps to ISLAND STOCKADE.
  - e. Main Supply Road: BEACH ROAD. Priority of use: combat troops, evacuation, supply.
  - f. Traffic Control: Divisions will maintain Military Police control of traffic as follows:
    - 2d Marine Division: BEACH ROAD west of the command post 2d Marine Division (incl), and the MARINE TRAIL.
    - 25th Infantry Division: BEACH ROAD east of the command post 2d Marine Division (excl) to the Perimeter, WRIGHT ROAD, and RUST TRAIL.
    - Americal Division: All hard-surfaced roads within the Perimeter.
5. a. Signal Operations Instructions, Hq Island Command, 26 Dec 42.
- b. Command Posts: to be reported to this headquarters when determined.
- c. Strict radio discipline and cryptographic security will be maintained at all times by all units.

PATCH

RIDINGS  
G-3

APPENDIX VIII

MAPS: W Sector 8-Sheet Photo Map, MATANIKAU-KOKUMBONA area, 1/14,545.  
Opn Overlay, Annex #1.

1. a. Enemy, as shown on Opn Overlay. (Int Summary, Annex #2).
  - (1) The 2d Marine Div will maintain contact with the right flank of the 25th Div.
  - (2) The perimeter defense will intensify patrolling and insure protection of rear areas. It will extend protection along the beach to the mouth of the Matanikau.
  - (3) The Amer Div Arty will be prepared to reinforce the fires of the 25th Div with two (2) bns of light and one (1) bn of medium arty.
  - (4) The 2d Mar Air Wing will support this attack on call, and will engage targets of opportunity.
2. The 25th Div, with the 3rd Bn 182d Inf atchd, will attack at 0630, 22 Jan 43, turning the enemy's south flank and seize that part of the Corps objective within its zone of action. It will protect the south flank of the Corps. Upon seizure of the Corps objective, the Div will be prepared to continue the attack without delay and seize Hills 88 and 89. L of D: line held at time of attack. For other details, see Opn Overlay.
3. a. The 27th Inf will attack generally to the west and seize the Div objective within its sector. It will assist the 161st Inf on its south, and be prepared to continue the attack to the NW.  
b. The 161st Inf making its principal effort initially to the SW will seize Hills X, Y, and Z, then continue its attack to the NW and seize the Div objective within its sector, and protect the SW flank of the Div W of ridges X, Y, and Z. It will be prepared to continue the attack to the NW.  
c. The 35th Inf with the 3rd Bn 182d Inf atchd, upon completion of the mopping-up operations within its area east of Grid 66, will assemble in Div Res as shown on Opn Overlay. It will assign not to exceed one bn to defend the south flank of the Div east of Grid 66, and will maintain active patrolling on the south and southwest as far as the IUNGA. It will continue to cover the Div Arty position area.  
d. The 25th Div Arty, initially from present positions, will support the attack by successive concentrations. It will be prepared to mass its fire in either regtl zone of action. It will be prepared to reinforce the fires of the 2d Mar Div with two (2) bns of light and one (1) bn of medium arty. Support assignments: SOP 25th Div.

APPENDIX IX

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- e. The 65th Engr Bn will maintain and extend present roads, and furnish Engr support to the 27th and 161st Inf.
  - f. (1) Every effort will be made to conceal the movement of troops into attack positions.
  - (2) Isolated points of enemy resistance will be contained and by-passed, then reduced later. Maximum use will be made of mortars, arty and air support in affecting reductions.
  - (3) Any indication of enemy withdrawal will be reported to Div CP immediately.
  - (4) For other details see SOP 25th Div.
4. Adm Details.
- a. For service installations, see Opn Overlay.
  - b. Traffic.
    - (1) The following roads are open to  $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton traffic only until further notice:
      - (a). Tyler Trail to Hill 66 to Snake's Mouth (68.2 - 198.6).
      - (b). Road from west end of the South Matanikau Bridge to Hill 55, to Hill 53.
  - c. Other Adm details, no change.
5. a. CP's Opn Overlay.
- b. See SOI, XIV Corps, for pyrotechnic and airplane panel signals.

J. LAWTON COLLINS,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

APPENDIX IX

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

INTELLIGENCE ANNEX

HEADQUARTERS  
25TH DIVISION  
20 Jan 43, 1600

MAPS: West Sector, 8 Sheet Photo Map, Matanikau - Kokumbona Area,  
Scale: 1/14,545.

1. SUMMARY OF ENEMY SITUATION:

- a. See G-2 Report and attached overlay.
- b. Remnants of the 228th Inf Regt and the 230th Inf Regt may be contacted to our front on the Hill Mass 87-88-89.

2. TERRAIN:

- a. The front of our north flank consists of rugged mountainous country covered with dense jungle and dominated by Hill Mass 87-88-89. See attached overlay #2 for drainage of area. Possible enemy trails are indicated on Overlay #1.
- b. The front of our South flank consists almost entirely of rugged jungle country except for the open patches, X, Y, and Z. Possible trails, see Overlay #1. Drainage, see Overlay #2.

3. RECONNAISSANCE AND OBSERVATION MISSIONS:

- a. Unit on South flank will reconnoiter and patrol vigorously to the South West.
- b. Division CP at (70.5 - 198.2).

COLLINS  
Cmdg.

APPENDIX IX

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

APPENDIX X

OBLIQUE VIEWS OF ZONE OF ACTION

|       |      |  |
|-------|------|--|
| PLATE | III  | VIEW TOWARD HILL 27 FROM NORTHEAST                           |
| PLATE | V    | THE GALLOPING HORSE  |
| PLATE | VII  | ZONE OF ACTION OF 27TH INFANTRY TO<br>KOKUMBOUA              |
| PLATE | VIII | HORSE'S HEAD FROM SIMS RIDGE<br>SIMS' RIDGE FROM EXTON RIDGE |
| PLATE | IX   | APPROACH TO HILL MASS 87, 88, 89                             |
| PLATE | XIV  | TERRAIN SOUTH OF HILL MASS 87, 88, 89                        |

APPENDIX X



VIEW TOWARD HILL 27 FROM NORTHEAST

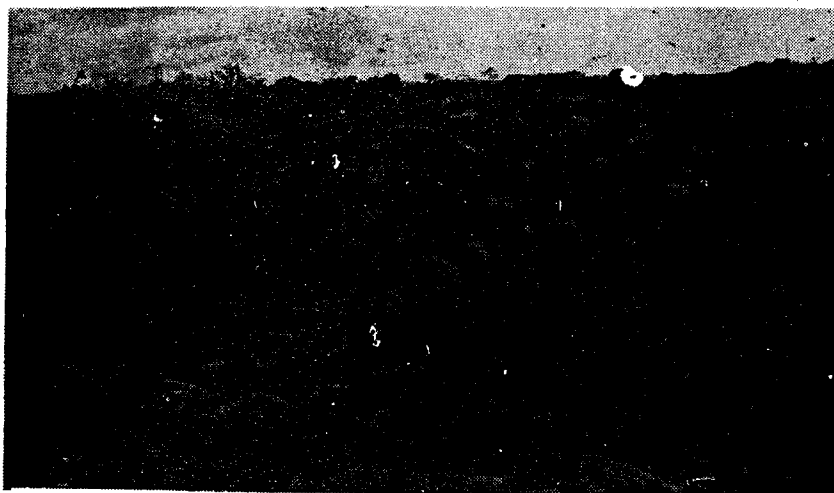


THE GALLOPING HORSE

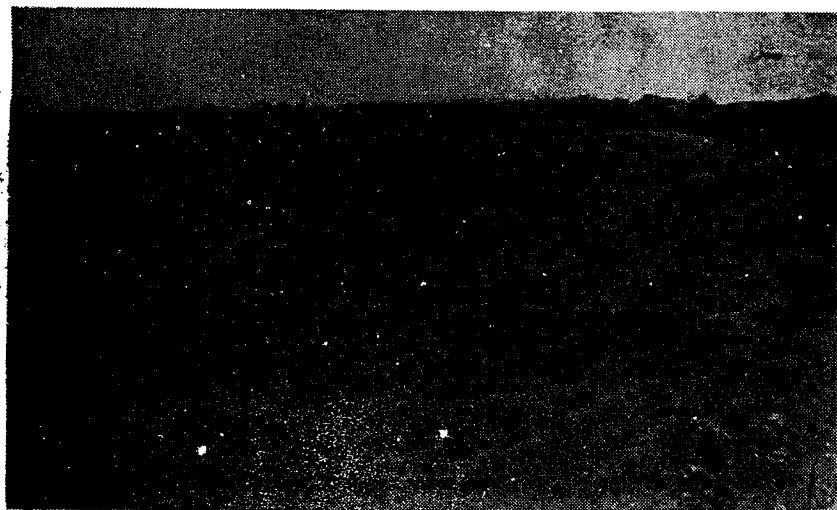
PLATE V



**HORSE'S HEAD FROM SIMS RIDGE**



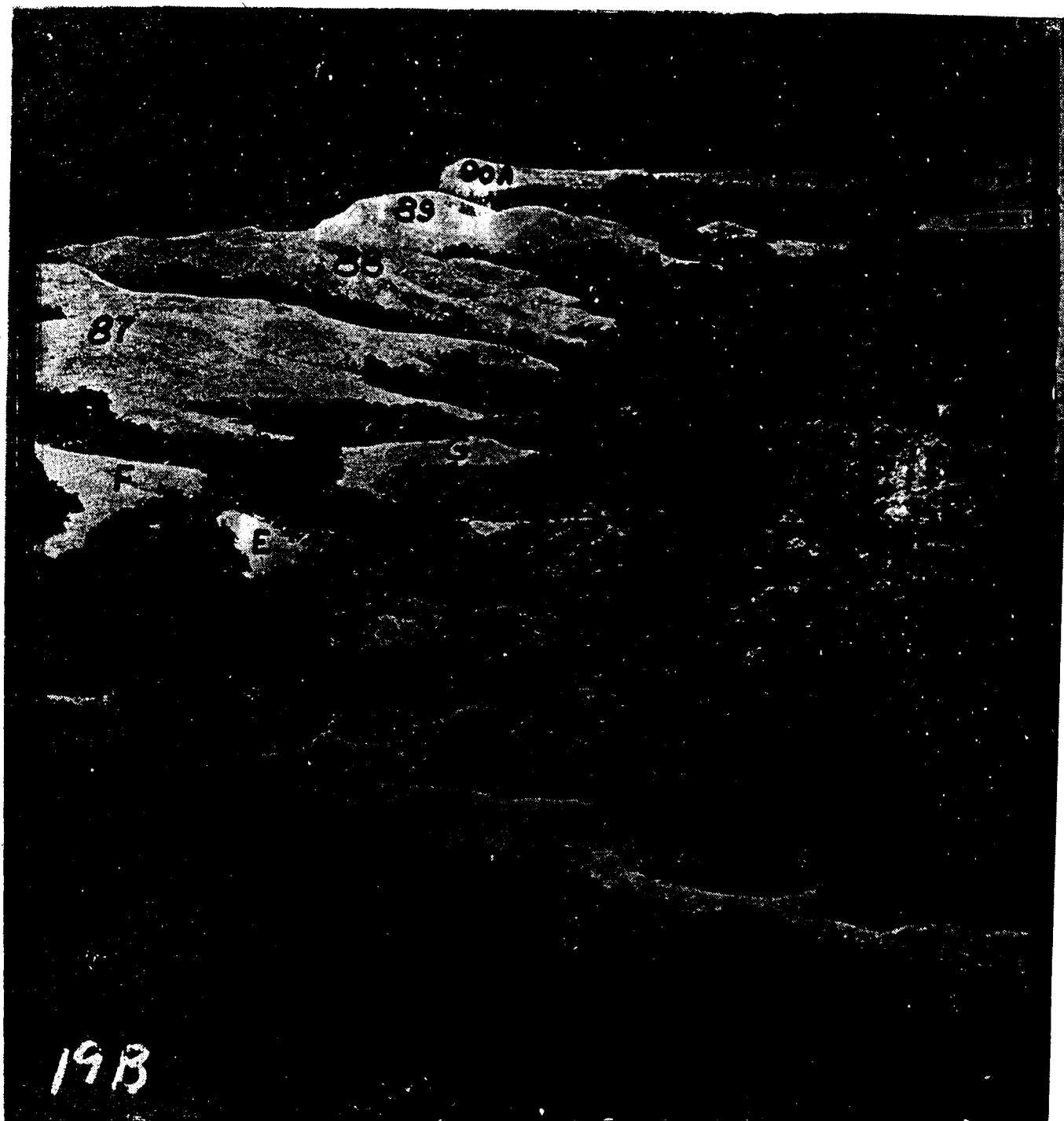
**SIMS RIDGE FROM EXTON RIDGE**



**SW TIP EXTON RIDGE TOWARD HILL 57**

**PLATE VIII**

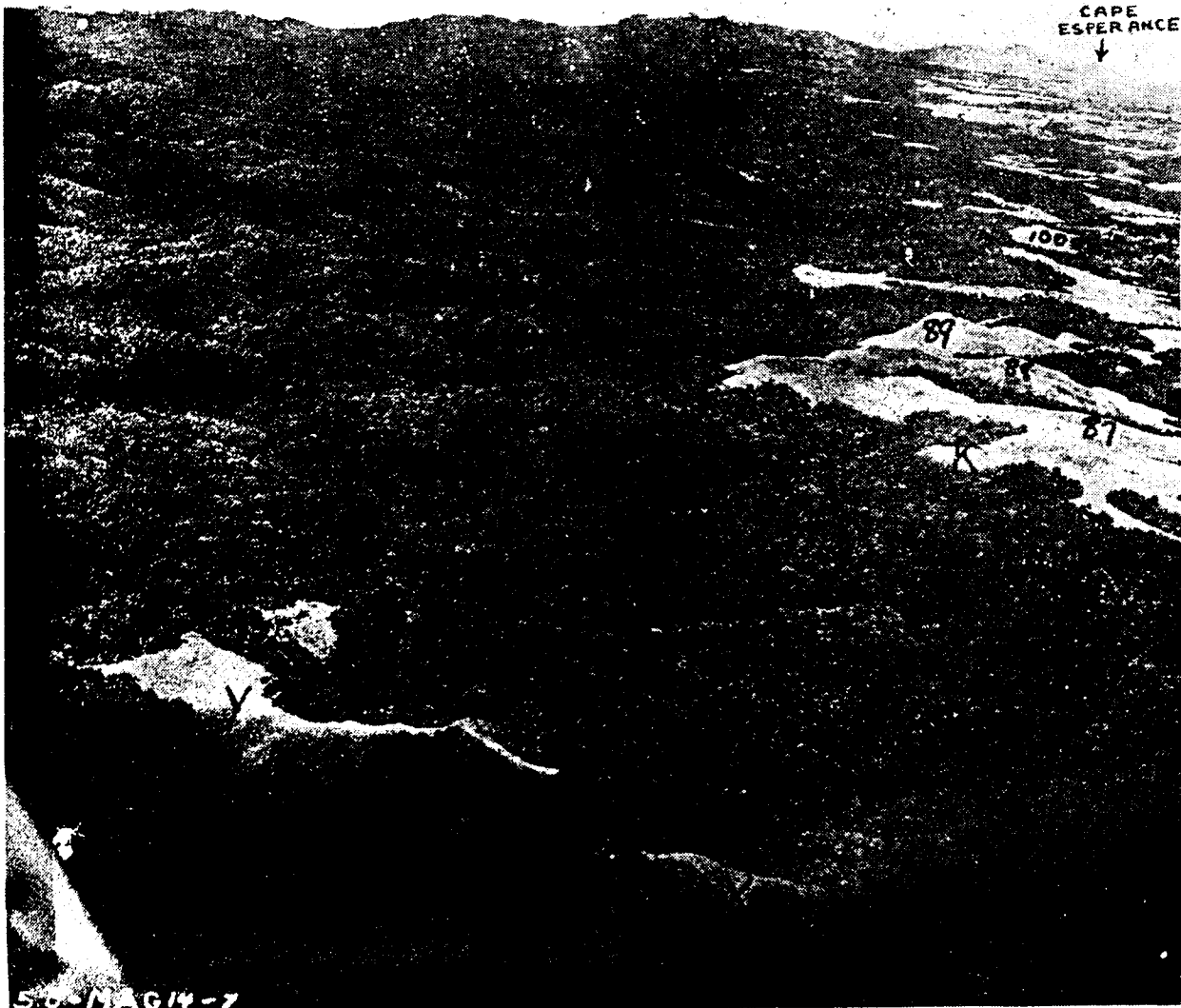






HILL MASS 87 , 88 , 89

W



TERRAIN SOUTH OF HILL MASS 87 - 88 - 89

PLATE XIV

APPENDIX XI

A PICTORIAL REVIEW OF DIVISION HISTORY

|       |         |   |
|-------|---------|---|
| PLATE | I       | STAFF 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION GUADALCANAL              |
| PLATE | XVII    | TERREL BRIDGE   |
| PLATE | XI      | JAP POSITION IN GIFU STRONGPOINT                      |
| PLATE | XII     | SCENES ALONG THE FRONT                                |
| PLATE | XV      | EFFECTS OF AERIAL, NAVAL AND ARTILLERY<br>BOMBARDMENT |
| PLATE | XVI     | SNAKE TRAIL<br>III PONTON BRIDGE                      |
| PLATE | XVIII   | JEEP AND BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION<br>BY THE ENGINEERS      |
| PLATE | XIX-XXI | SCENES OF EVACUATION ON THE FRONT                     |

APPENDIX XI



## STAFF 25TH DIVISION GUADALCANAL

LEFT TO RIGHT, 1<sup>ST</sup> ROW: COL. R. B. MCCLURE, COL. W. A. McCULLOCH,  
GEN. S. E. REINHART, GEN. J. L. COLLINS (DIVISION COMMANDER)  
GEN. J. R. HODGE, COL. W. P. BLEDSOE, LT. COL. F. W. GREENOUGH.

2<sup>ND</sup> ROW: LT. COL. D. H. BUCHANAN, LT. COL. A. H. THOMPSON,  
LT. COL. F. W. RICE, LT. COL. P. M. REEVE, LT. COL. M. P. CHADWICK,  
LT. COL. F. T. VOORHEES, LT. COL. J. K. BUSH, COL. R. A. ELLSWORTH.

3<sup>RD</sup> ROW: CAPT. TEEDY DEESE, MAJ. B. L. LEARNAN, MAJ. N. M. MCKAIG,  
LT. COL. P. F. LINDEMAN, LT. COL. T. J. MARNANE, LT. COL. C. H. MILES,  
LT. COL. S. F. CRAWFORD, MAJ. W. A. SWEETEN, CAPT. W. T. BAUGHN,  
CHAP. FINNEGAN, MAJ. J. H. SMITH.

PLATE 1



TERREL BRIDGE SITE

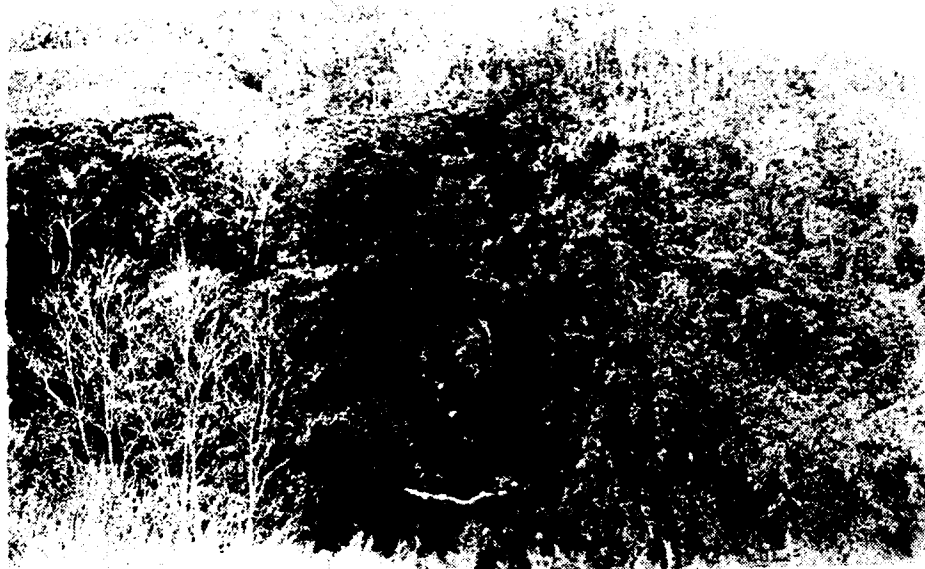


TERREL BRIDGE (NOTE CORDUROY ROAD )

PLATE XVII



JAP PILL BOXES IN GIFU STRONG POINT



GIFU STRONG POINT FROM HILL 42



JAP PILL BOX IN GIFU STRONG POINT



BIVOUAC IN GIFU

## SCENES ALONG THE FRONT



60° SLOPE ON TRAIL CUT BY 35TH INF



GRASSY PLAIN ON JUNGLE EDGE



CHOW LINE ALONG THE MATANIKAU  
PRIOR TO JUMP OFF



FLUSHING PATROL OF 161ST INF  
NW FORK OF MATANIKAU



JUNGLE NORTH SLOPE  
GALLOPING HORSE

PLATE XII





**RESULTS OF NAVAL AND ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENT WEST OF POINT CRUZ**



**JUNGLE CLEARED BY ARTILLERY**



**RESULTS OF 155MM HE ON 4 FT. TREE**

**PLATE XV**

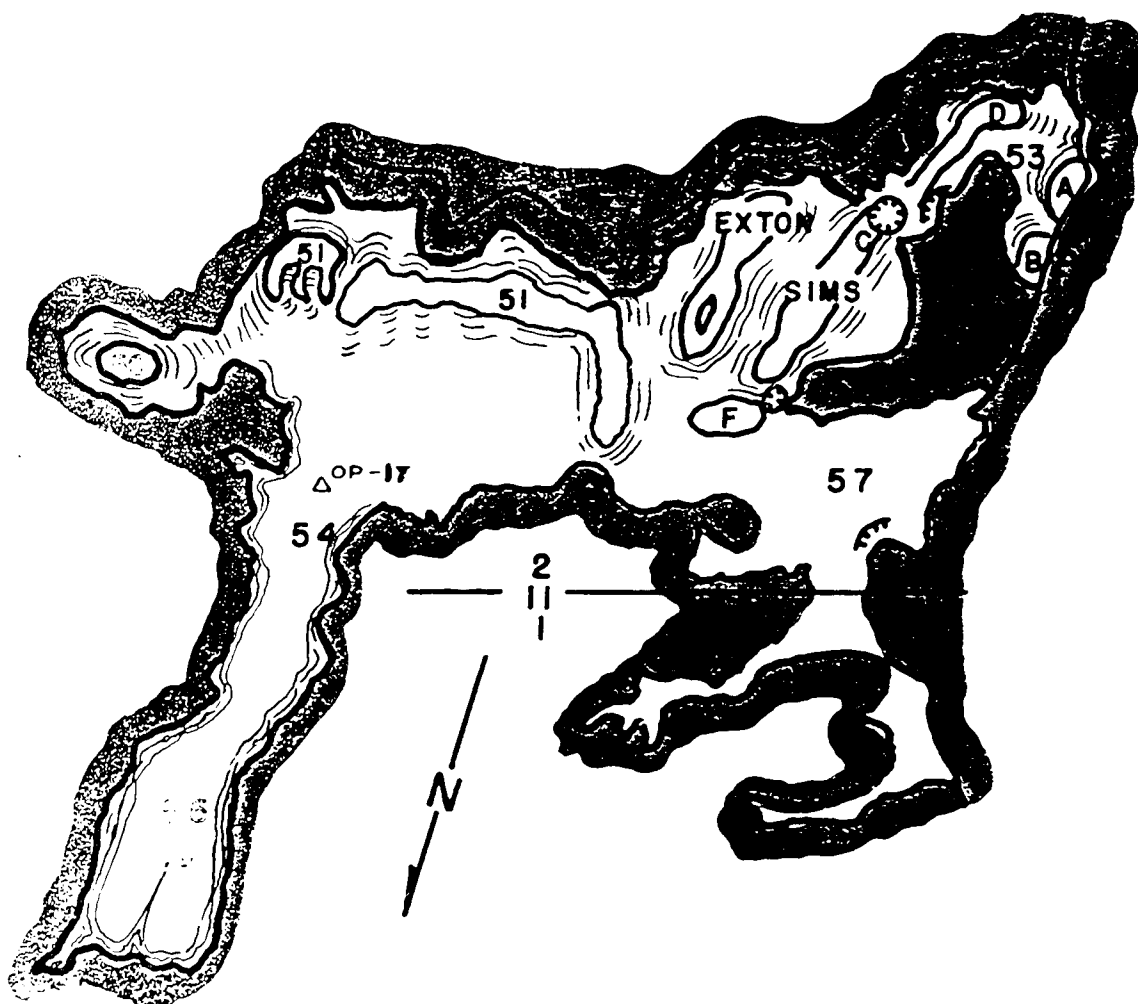


SNAKE TRAIL



ILU PONTON BRIDGE

PLATE XV





ZONE OF ACTION OF 27TH INFANTRY FROM GALLOPING HORSE  
TO KOKUMBONA



**JEEP TRAIL AND BRIDGE. CONSTRUCTED BY ENGINEERS**



**BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION BY ENGINEER BATTALION**



**FIRST AID AT THE FRONT**



**PREPARING TO EVACUATE  
CASUALTY**

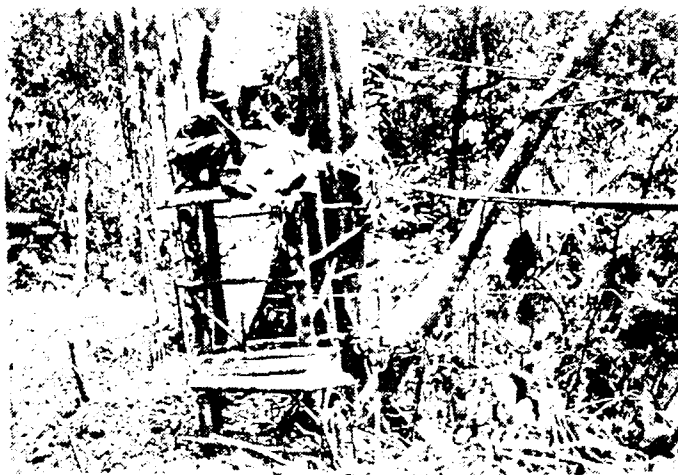


**TAKING CASUALTY THROUGH  
THE JUNGLE**



**STEEP SLOPES MADE EVACUATION  
DIFFICULT**

PLATE VII



**CABLE TOWER FOR EVACUATING  
CASUALTIES**

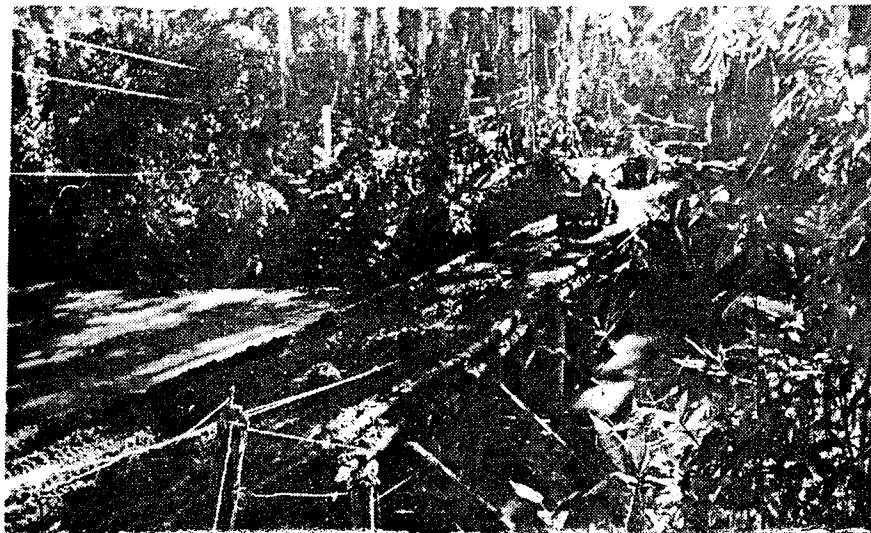


**CABLE CAR (STOKES LITTER)  
TRANSPORTING CASUALTY**

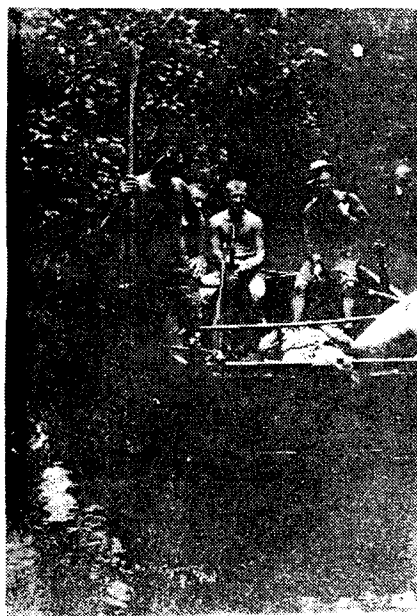


**STOKES LITTER USED AS SLED DOWN  
GRASSY SLOPES (NOTE NATIVE CARRIER IN  
BACKGROUND )**

**PLATE XX**



**NORTH TERMINAL OF MATANIKAU BARGE LINE**



**BARGE AMBULANCE**



**JEEP AMBULANCE**



I. KEY EVENTS

| <u>EVENT</u>                      | <u>DATE</u>       |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 35th CT arrives Guadalcanal       | 17 DEC 42         |
| 27th CT arrives Guadalcanal       | 1 JAN 43          |
| 161st CT arrives Guadalcanal      | 4 JAN 43          |
| XIV Corps LOI issued              | 5 JAN 43          |
| 25th IN Div Field Order #1 issued | 8 JAN 43          |
| Phase I of Offensive Operations   | 10 - 14 JAN 43    |
| XIV Corps Field Order #1 issued   | 16 JAN 43         |
| Mopping Up Operations             | 15 - 21 JAN 43    |
| 25th IN Div Field Order #2 issued | 20 JAN 43         |
| Phase II of Offensive Operations  | 22 - 26 JAN 43    |
| Final Mopping Up Operations       | 26 JAN - 9 FEB 43 |
| Defensive Operations              | 10 FEB - JUL 43   |

## II. SUMMARY OF DIVISION OPERATIONS

### A. MISSION

PHASE I 25th Infantry Division relieves 132d Infantry on Mount Austen without delay. After completion of relief, 25th Div with 3d Bn, 182d Inf, Rcn Sq Americal Div, and 1st Bn, 2d Marines attached, will attack at 0635, 10 JAN and seize and hold the line approximately 3,000 yards west of Mount Austin.

PHASE II 25th Infantry Division, with the 3rd Bn, 182d Inf attached, will attack at 0630, 22 JAN, turning the enemy's south flank and seize that part of the Corps objective within its zone of action. It will protect the south flank of the Corps. Upon seizure of the Corps objective, the Division will be prepared to continue the attack without delay and seize Hills 88 and 89. Line of Departure: line held at time of attack.

### B. TASK ORGANIZATION

#### PHASE I

27th IN Reg with Rcn Sq, Americal Div attached  
35th IN Reg with 25th Div Rcn Tr attached  
161st IN Reg  
8th FA Bn DS of 27th IN Reg  
64th FA Bn DS of 35th IN Reg  
89th FA Bn and 90th FA Bn (155mm) in GS  
65th EN Bn support 27th and 35th IN Regs  
2d Bn, 10th Marines (75mm) attached

#### PHASE II

27th IN Reg  
35th IN Reg with 3rd Bn, 182d IN attached  
161st IN Reg  
8th FA Bn GS  
64th FA Bn GS  
89th FA Bn GS  
65th EN Bn support 27th and 161st IN Regs

### C. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

#### PHASE I

Summaries of the regimental operations will be covered in Part II of this document. The operations of the Division went off as planned and by 15 JAN the three great pockets, which the maneuvers were designed to create, had been made and the bulk of the Japanese forces had been effectively bottled up. Note should be taken of the remarkable fighting of the 27th and 35th IN Regs. The operations of the 27th in the capture of Hills 52 and 53 and the head of the "Galloping Horse" were over open country. In contrast, the operations of the 35th IN Reg were carried on through the densest and most difficult of tropical jungles. The 35th IN Reg beat the Japanese at their own game of jungle fighting. Three 25th IN Div soldiers received the Congressional Medal of Honor for their exploits during this Phase of the operations. (See TAB B)

#### MOPPING UP

The week of 15 - 21 JAN was devoted to mopping up the three pockets that had been created and in squeezing the Japanese within these pockets into smaller areas where they could be annihilated. The reduction of the pocket between Hills 31 and 27 was a major operation as was the elimination of the Japanese pocketed south of Hills 52 and 53 by 1st Bn, 161st IN Reg. The division also extended the road net in preparation for PHASE II.

#### PHASE II

By 1530, 22 JAN, the 27th IN Reg seized Hills 88 and 89, and before dark had its leading battalion on Hills 90 and 98 overlooking Kokumbona. By noon, 23 JAN, 27th IN seized Kokumbona. The 27th covered approximately ten miles in a day and a half. During 24 - 25 JAN, the 161st IN Reg extended its security lines all the way from Hill 50 to Hill 90, freeing the 27th for advance to the west. Due to a threat of a Japanese attack in force against Guadalcanal, the division was withdrawn and moved to area east of the Lunga River and occupies beach defense positions covering Henderson and Carney Fields. The 27th pushed its advance west of the Poha River and captured great quantities of enemy artillery, ammunition and supplies before it was relieved 26 JAN by 147th IN and 6th Marines.

C. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS (CON'T)

FINAL OPERATIONS OF 161ST INFANTRY

2 FEB, the 161st IN Reg, attached to the Americal Division, relieved the 147th IN west of the Bongasi River and took over the advance on Cape Esperance. By 5 FEB, the 161st and the battalions of the 132d IN had made a juncture a few miles east of Cape Esperance. The Japanese occupation of Guadalcanal was over.

### III. SUMMARY OF REGIMENTAL OPERATIONS

#### A. OPERATIONS OF THE 27TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

COMMANDER: COL William A. McCulloch

##### PHASE I

The 27th IN's mission was to seize the "Galloping Horse" by attacking with two battalions; the 1st Bn on the right and the 3rd on its left. The 2d Bn being in reserve. After the objective was taken the 1st Bn was ordered to assist by fire the advance of the 3d Bn on its left. On 10 JAN the attack was preceded by artillery and aerial bombardments. Beginning at 0550, five Bns of FA laid exceedingly heavy fire on the "Waterhole" and the forelegs of the "Galloping Horse". At 0615, the artillery ceased firing and the navy and army dive bombers began dropping depth charges on the "Waterhole" until 0635. At the conclusion of the bombardment, the 1st and 3rd Bns began maneuver operations. The objective was captured at 1140. That evening the 1st Bn made contact with the 3rd Bn on Hill 52 and on 11 JAN, they supported by fire the attack of the 3rd Bn. The 3rd Bn began their attack at 0900, prior to receiving adequate resupply of water. This would prove disastrous to the 3d Bn. Elements of two companies of the battalion received heavy enemy fire as they moved up the slope of Hill 57 and were forced to dig in. Later they withdrew to Hill 52. The other companies met enemy resistance as they moved up the ravine, called for artillery and mortar fire, and made no effort to maneuver. They were congested, kept under fire, suffered several casualties and suffered heat exhaustion. The battalion was unable to meet the objective on 10 JAN and on 11 JAN, the 2d Bn passed through the 3d Bn at 0630, following which the 3d Bn became the regimental reserve on Hill 55. By 13 JAN, elements of the 2d Bn reached all objectives by heroic and determined fighting. Most notable were the actions of MAJ (then CPT) Charles W. Davis, Bn Xo, who later received the Congressional Medal of Honor. (See TAB B)

##### PHASE II

The 1st Bn sent one company to outpost the "Snake's Back" west of the "Galloping Horse"'s foreleg and one company on patrol south along "Snake's Back". The company on patrol made contact with the enemy in the vicinity of "Snake's Tail" and called for previously arranged artillery concentration on the enemy. This was the first time that this method of fire control had been used and it worked so effectively that all subsequent patrols maintained contact with Forward Observers. The remainder of 1st Bn formed an all around defense from the "Snake's Mouth" to the middle of its "Back". The 3rd Bn occupied the foreleg of the "Galloping Horse". On 22 JAN

### III. SUMMARY OF REGIMENTAL OPERATIONS (CON'T)

1st Bn attacked and seized Hills 87, 88, 89, 90. On 23 JAN, 1st Bn, in two columns, attacked, seized, and occupied Kokumbona by 1530. On 24 JAN, the 2d Bn took over the attack to push on westward toward the Poha River. The attack did not jump off until noon because of the problem of supplying food, water and ammunition. 2d Bn attacked along the high ground lying to the left of the regimental zone of action. Shortly after dusk Company F reached the objective and joined 3rd Bn. Blocks were established between Hills 97-100, 100-103, and 103-106. On 25 JAN the 3rd Bn was ordered to turn the sector of Hills 98 and 99 over to the 6th Marines. There was a misunderstanding concerning the relief order and as a result the battalion was delayed in arrival in Kokumbona by one hour. The 3rd Bn continued the attack westward and secured the line of the Poha River, joining up with 2d Bn on Hill 105 at 1730. The regiment consolidated at Kokumbona on 26 JAN where it assumed the Corps Reserve.

#### B. OPERATIONS OF THE 35TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

COMMANDER: COL R. B. McClure

##### PHASE I

The scheme of maneuver for the regiment during this Phase was: 1st Battalion was the regimental reserve; the 2d Battalion was to hold the line then held by 132nd IN, to maintain constant contact with the enemy on its front and to contact 182nd IN on its right; and the 3rd Battalion was to advance south of Hill 27 and sieze and hold Hills 43 and 44. At 0635, 10 JAN, the 3rd Battalion began is envelopment. Patrols from Company K, 3rd Battalion, came across a Japanese supply party, attacked and wiped them out. The Japanese reorganized to reestablish their supply line but they were unsuccessful in their attack on elements of 3rd Battalion. The 1st Battalion, trailing 3rd Battalion, closed the gap at 1900. At dawn on 11 JAN, the regiment renewed the attack and encircled Gifu Strong Point on the top and western slope of MT Austen by dark. All routes of enemy escape were cut off. On 12 JAN, the 1st Battalion continued the attack extending west towards the Division objective. Resistance was strong and the advance was temporarily halted. Artillery and 81mm mortars gave the needed aid to blast the opposition. By 15 JAN, the 1st Battalion invaded a large Japanese Bivouac area, captured a 70mm gun, a number of prisoners and considerable quantities of Japanese ammunition and supplies. On 16 JAN, the 1st Battalion were on a precipice overlooking the Matanikau, the Division objective. While the 1st and 3rd Battalions were the encircling elements of a successful attack, the 2d Battalion contained the enemy in the Gifu Strong Point.

## PHASE II

The regiment tightened the pressure gradually around the entire Gifu Strong Point, cutting off the enemy line of communications almost completely by extending a line between Hills 27 and 42. On 16 and 17 JAN loudspeakers demanded Japanese surrender but the result was negative. This was followed by a continuous two and one half hours bombardment of the entire area from four battalions of 105s and one battalion of 155mm. The companies maneuvered during the next four days to destroy enemy pillboxes and tighten the noose. On 23 JAN the Japanese attempted a counterattack with approximately 100 men. The skirmish lasted 20 minutes and 85 Japanese were killed and three taken prisoner. The unit remained in position until 26 JAN, effectively eliminating all Japanese resistance. The total enemy killed during the operation was 431 and American losses numbered 64 KIA and 42 WIA.

### C. OPERATIONS OF THE 161ST INFANTRY REGIMENT

COMMANDER: COL JAMES L. DALTON, II

## PHASE I

On 6 JAN, the regiment relieved the 35th IN in the perimeter defense of Henderson Field. On 10 JAN, the 1st Battalion was attached to 27th IN. 1st Battalion's initial mission was to secure the left flank of 27th IN and to block on the Matanikau River south of Hill 50. The battalion occupied Hills 50, 51, 52, and 54. Several company size elements spent the period 15 - 21 JAN trying to clear out Japanese from the Matanikau Valley to bridge the gap between the 27th IN on Hill 53 and the 35th IN south of the Matanikau River. The terrain included steep gullies with heavy foliage and mud on top of coral. The units had difficulty as the enemy used the terrain to their advantage. Artillery and mortar fire support was not available until 19 JAN, but once employed, 1st Battalion's mortars were effective in clearing the pocket. It was estimated afterwards that approximately 300 - 400 Japanese were in that pocket.

## PHASE II

By 21 JAN, the regiment occupied Hills X, Y, 52, and 53. The Division gave them the mission to attack as the main effort on the left flank, secure Hill 87 and prepare to attack northwest. On 22 JAN the 2nd Battalion jumped off from Hill Y for Hill 87. However, the Division changed the regiment's mission to secure the left flank of the corps and contain any enemy encountered. The 2nd Battalion continue on to Hill N, meeting only minor opposition. The 3rd Battalion moved via Hill 57 to assembly area on the "Snake" while the 1st Battalion occupied both river blocks and Hills 50 to 53 inclusive. From 23 to 26 JAN, the regiment continued patrolling and extended its line to include Hills 90, 90A, 89, Q, R, S. X, Y, and Z. On 26 JAN, the Division was relieved by the 2nd Marine Division and the 161st IN passed to corps control with mission unchanged. On 1 FEB, the regiment reverted to 25th IN Division control and was ordered to occupy and defend the beach front from Kokumbona to the Matanikau River. The 2nd Battalion stayed in the assembly area. The 1st Battalion occupied the regimental beach sector and the 3rd Battalion took over security and patrolling to secure the corps' left flank from Hill 27 to Hill 90A.

## MOPPING UP OPERATIONS

On 5 FEB, the 161st was attached to the Americal Division with the regimental mission to pass through the 147th IN and attack west towards Cape Esperance. At 1000, 6 FEB, the regiment passed through the 147th IN. The 3rd Battalion advanced in two-company front to the Umasani River and patrolled to the west thereof. The 2nd Battalion moved up onto Hill 127 and then to Hill 132. On 7 FEB the 2nd Battalion crossed the Umasani River and occupied Hill 142 and 143. Efforts to get rations to forces on Hill 142 failed as the route was inaccessible even to pack animals. The 3rd Battalion met only sporadic and disorganized resistance and the 2nd Battalion met none. The Japanese were in poor condition and were living among their own diseased and unburied dead. By the close of 8 FEB, the regimental commander estimated that the Japanese were not defending or delaying, but were fleeing. On 9 FEB, the 161st IN occupied a beach defense position on the Tenamba River and they spent the next several days improving defenses, patrolling, salvaging Japanese materiel, recovering telephone wire and disposing of their dead. On 14 FEB, the 161st IN soldiers and equipment were loaded on six LCTs and moved to Koli Point to take up beach defense in that vicinity.



TAB A DIVISION COMMANDER COMMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. Japanese Weaknesses The Japanese force had been considerably weakened by combat losses, inadequate food, and malaria. They had very little artillery, only small stocks of ammunition and lacked the engineering equipment to improve their supply line. In addition, the 25th Infantry Division had complete aerial superiority throughout the operations.

2. Faulty Use of Cover and Concealment We occupied open ridges with little fear of Japanese response with artillery or aviation. The troops bivouacked in congested groups and marched and drove jeeps along ridge trails.

3. Necessity for Early Warning Prompt and effective aerial and ground reconnaissance is a necessity. Advanced planning necessary for a sound system of supply and evacuation. Careful analysis and evaluation of terrain is essential. Scheme of maneuver must be based on terrain, lines of communication, and avenues for supply and evacuation.

3. Soundness of Basic Principles Elements of the attack are employed to find the enemy and fix him so that he can't get away while we fight him, usually by an envelopment around one or both of his flanks supported by the base of fire. Every effort must be made to fool the enemy as to the time, place, strength of our maneuver. Finally, we must finish him by throwing in our reserves at the critical moment. Throughout we must fend, or guard our own flanks and lines of communication. We should continue to apply with intelligence or six "F"'s.

4. Value of Teamwork The teamwork developed during our Oahu training was one of our greatest sources of strength. The Division functioned as a smooth working, well-oiled machine.

5. Leadership and Fighting Qualities of Troops The most inspiring thing about the operations of the division was the magnificent way in which the young officers and noncoms did rise to these occasions and the manner in which the men of the division responded to inspiring leadership. Ably led, the American soldier can go anywhere, do anything, and lick more than his weight against any enemy in the world and it is up to everyone of us, officers and noncommissioned officers alike, to furnish this leadership.

TAB C GLOSSARY OF HILL NAMES

| <u>NAME</u>              | <u>HILLS</u>               | <u>GRID</u>    |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Galloping Horse          | 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 57 | 68-70, 197-199 |
| Galloping Horse Head     | 53                         | 68, 197        |
| Galloping Horse Forelegs | 57                         | 68.5, 198      |
| Sea Horse                | 43, 44                     | 70, 197-198    |
| Sea Horse Head           | 43                         | 69.5, 198      |
| Kangaroo                 | 66                         | 69. 200-201    |
| Snake                    | --                         | 67-68, 198.3   |
| Dead Cow Ridge           | 518                        | 31.7 - 21.4    |

TAB D      COMMANDERS AND STAFF

COMMANDING GENERAL  
ADC  
ARTILLERY CDR  
CHIEF OF STAFF  
ACOFs, G1  
ACOFs, G2  
ACOFs, G3  
ACOFs, G4  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
ENGINEER OFFICER  
SIGNAL OFFICER  
ORDNANCE OFFICER  
SURGEON  
QUARTERMASTER  
CHAPLAIN  
CDR, 27TH IN  
    1ST BN  
    2d BN  
    3d BN  
CDR, 35TH IN  
    1st BN  
    2d BN  
    3d BN  
CDR, 161ST IN  
CDR, 8TH FA BN  
CDR, 64TH FA BN  
CDR, 89TH FA BN  
CDR, 90TH FA BN

MG J. Lawton Collins  
BG John R. Hodge  
BG Stanley E. Reinhart  
COL William P. Bledsoe  
LTC Thomas J. Marnane  
LTC Stuart F. Crawford  
LTC Joseph K. Bush  
LTC David H. Buchanan  
MAJ William A. Sweeten  
LTC Parker M. Reeve  
LTC Maurice P. Chadwick  
LTC Philip F. Lindeman  
LTC Arthur H. Thompson  
LTC Frederick T. Voorhees  
MAJ Terence P. Finnegan  
COL William A. McCulloch  
LTC Claude E. Journey  
MAJ B.F. Evans, JR  
LTC George E. Bush  
COL Robert B. McClure  
LTC James B. Leer  
LTC Stanley R. Larsen  
LTC William J. Mullen, JR  
COL James L. Dalton, II  
LTC William W. Dick, JR  
LTC William H. Allen, JR  
LTC Marshall K. Rudolph  
LTC James J. Heriot

TAB B CITATIONS OF RECEIPIENTS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL  
MEDAL OF HONOR (CON'T)

DAVIS, CHARLES W. MAJ

For distinguishing himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy on Guadalcanal Island. On 12 January 1943, MAJ Davis (then CPT), executive officer of 2d BN, 27th IN Regiment, volunteered to carry instructions to the leading companies of his battalion which had been caught in crossfire from Japanese machineguns. With complete disregard for his own safety, he made his way to the trapped units, delivered the instructions, supervised their execution, and remained overnight in this exposed position. On the following day, MAJ Davis again volunteered to lead an assault on the Japanese position which was holding up the advance. When his rifle jammed at its first shot, he drew his pistol and, waving his men on, led the assault over the top of the hill. Electrified by this action, another body of soldiers followed and seized the hill. The capture of this position broke Japanese resistance and the battalion was then able to proceed and secure the corps objective. The courage and leadership displayed by MAJ Davis inspired the entire battalion and unquestionably led to the success of the attack.

TAB C CITATIONS OF RECEIPIENTS OF CONGRESSIONAL  
MEDAL OF HONOR

The following two soldiers, assigned to Company M, 35th IN Regiment, were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions on 10 JAN 43:

FOURNIER, WILLIAM G. SGT

For gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. As leader of a machinegun section charged with the protection of other battalion units, his group was attacked by a superior number of Japanese, his gunner killed, his assistant gunner wounded, and an adjoining guncrew put out of action. Ordered to withdraw from this hazardous position, SGT Fournier refused to retire but rushed forward to the idle gun and, with the aid of another soldier who joined him, held up the machinegun by the tripod to increase its field action. They opened fire and inflicted heavy casualties upon the enemy. While so engaged both these gallant soldiers were killed, but their sturdy defensive was a decisive factor in the following success of the attacking battalion.

HALL, LEWIS, TECHNICIAN FIFTH GRADE (T/5)

For gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. As leader of a machinegun squad charged with the protection of other battalion units, his group was attacked by a superior number of Japanese, his gunner killed, his assistant gunner wounded, and an adjoining guncrew put out of action. Ordered to withdraw from his hazardous position, he refused to retire but rushed forward to the idle gun and with the aid of another soldier who joined him and held up the machinegun by the tripod to increase its field of action he opened fire and inflicted heavy casualties upon the enemy. While so engaged both these gallant soldiers were killed, but their sturdy defense was a decisive factor in the following success of the attacking battalion.